THE
LAND SCANDAL.

AL SIR REGINALD BACON,
K.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O.

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THE JUTLAND SCANDAL

The Jutland Scandal

By Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O. :: :: ::

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THE BRITISH PANTHEON.

BATTLE OF JUTLAND
1916

PHASE I., II., III., MAY 31ST

PHASE IV., NIGHT OF MAY 31ST–JUNE 1ST

AUTHOR'S NOTE

EVERY detail of the Battle of Jutland is of intense interest to any naval officer who, like myself, has spent his life in the Navy during its gradual development from sailing ships to super-Dreadnoughts. While dealing with every phase, problem and doubt during this great change we always looked forward to the great ordeal which awaited our modern Navy with a feeling akin to awe. So much had never been subjected to the stern realities of war, so much had necessarily to depend on forecast and theory, so much doubt was bound to exist as to whether other nations had not forestalled us in invention, adaption and assumption; that, in spite of all our labours, we felt that the outcome of a Naval War in the future might largely lie in the lap of the gods.

That we had done our best was all we could claim, that that best had in no particular been surpassed by others was all we dared to hope. For the remainder, our officers and men might well be trusted to see the country through.

To us, therefore, Jutland had a superlative interest, and we looked forward to the publication of the official Admiralty account of how the battle had been fought and the Germans beaten, with eager expectancy. Delays occurred in its production, sinister rumours were whispered abroad, culminating in a report that the account which had been drawn up by the independent Admiralty experts was undergoing alterations to suit official views.

After delay, Volume III. of the Official History of the War was issued, and, while waiting for the Admiralty narrative, was at once accepted as the standard history of

the battle. Then one year afterwards came the Admiralty Official Narrative, an anæmic production, whose claim to be regarded as an authoritative statement weakened and faded more and more as each succeeding sentence was read.

This long delay had affected adversely the prestige of the Admiralty. The Official Narrative when issued merely added to its discredit.

When the report was published an article appeared in the *Daily Express* purporting to be a recent interview with Admiral Scheer, who commanded the German High Sea Fleet at Jutland. Also in the *Sunday Express* an article appeared from the pen of Mr. Filson Young which, as a masterpiece of inaccurate imagery, can rarely, if ever, have been surpassed. These two articles most ignorantly condemned Lord Jellicoe's conduct of the British operations. I therefore wrote to both papers pointing out certain facts which should have been apparent to all who had devoted study to the details of the battle. The *Daily Express* courteously excused itself on the grounds that they had closed the discussion. The *Sunday Express* attempted no excuse for refusing to have its misrepresentations confuted.

It is this smoke screen which has been raised by a section of the Press to prevent the British public from learning the truth about Jutland that constitutes the scandal regarding that battle and furnishes the reason for writing this book.

Not uncommonly, after a war, praise and blame are apportioned most unfairly among those who have held command. Three officers have been blamed unjustly for operations in the North Sea.

The German cruisers escaped in the Dogger Bank action through a series of errors made by Lord Beatty. For this escape Admiral Sir Gordon Moore has popularly and most unfairly been held to blame.

A want of tactical appreciation on the part of Lord Beatty led to the 5th Battle Squadron not being engaged during the majority of the action in Jutland, Phase I. Admiral Sir H. Evan Thomas has been ungenerously and unjustly blamed for this in the Admiralty Narrative of the Battle of Jutland.

Lastly, the failure of Lord Beatty to keep in touch with the High Sea Battle Fleet, on his run north to join the Grand Fleet at the end of Jutland, Phase I., deprived Lord Jellicoe of vital information as to the position of that fleet and caused him to deploy in less rapid a manner than he would have had the requisite information been available. For this Lord Jellicoe has been blamed.

It is hoped that this book will help to readjust the incidence of blame in these matters, and that it will be carefully studied by all who value justice.

I have been at pains to verify all statements and details. I must add that Lord Jellicoe has had no hand directly or indirectly in the inception, writing, editing, or publishing of this book.

ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES

III. 5. "The Official History of the War—Naval Operations," by Julian Corbett. Longmans & Co. Volume III., page 5.

II. 20. Volume II. of above, page 20.

J.P. 45. "Battle of Jutland—Official Dispatch," Admiralty publication, page 45.

J.P. 467—1920. Same, page 467. Signal number, 1920.

G.F. 50. "The Grand Fleet," by Viscount Jellicoe of Scapa. Cassell. Page 50.

Page 95. Page 95 of "The Jutland Scandal."

Brassey's Annual. Brassey's Naval Annual.

K. and J. Kiel and Jutland, by Commander Georg Von Hase

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THE JUTLAND SCANDAL

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

A modern Navy—Difficulty of grasping gradual progress—Ignorance of the British public in Naval matters—How records of the old Navy cloud present-day vision—Jutland and consequent disappointment—Belief largely a matter of preconception—Dispassionate study of the late war recommended—Simile with animal warfare—Commerce—Commercial war—Its similarity with physical war—Necessity for the avoidance of gambling—Love of human beings of records of valour—When to encourage and discourage excess of valour—War a business proposition.

OF all our public services the Royal Navy is probably the one that for the last hundred years has been most honoured by the confidence reposed in it by the people of this country; but at the same time it has been throughout that period the least understood. Banished from view to the sea, where its life is spent in constant manœuvres and training, our fleet is only conspicuous on the special occasions of official parades and functions, when the work of a fighting service is paralysed, and the essential life of a navy is hidden under a cloak of artificiality.

Modern ships are marvels of engineering skill and development. Guns, armour, engines, electrical appliances, torpedoes, all tend to challenge the accurate knowledge even of those who daily live in contact with

them. To the average person ashore they remain abstract terms. In the old days it was much the same; masts, sails and rigging, the art of sailing a ship in all weathers and tides, navigation and the handling of a fleet were sealed chapters for the man ashore.

The progress from the ship of the early years of the nineteenth century to the *Hood* of the present day was a matter of slow evolution of detail; of patient following in the footsteps of the growth of science and invention ashore. Even men afloat often failed to grasp the full bearing of slow progress on strategy and tactics at sea. Can it be wondered at that the British public remained ignorant also?

The deeds of our ships and fleets in the old wars were duly chronicled, largely with an eye to public consumption, when victories were emphasized and defeats and failures minimized. Between the era of the old wars and that of the Great War, no active naval operations of any magnitude were undertaken; almost unbroken peace reigned at sea, there was nothing to chronicle that would appeal to the imagination of the public. Hence instruction in modern naval war, its battles and its methods, was denied to the country, and the nation as a whole culled its ideas of sea warfare from the deeds of a Navy of ancient and obsolete construction, and from methods of fighting long passed away.

When, therefore, the late war burst on the nation with meteoric suddenness, the minds of the people were imbued with old ideas of naval warfare which created vast expectations of spectacular achievement and victories similar to those of Trafalgar and the Nile. But nothing happened. The end of 1914 passed, 1915 came and left behind nothing much to remember at sea except some cruiser actions.

The facts that the whole of the German Oversea Navy had been destroyed or interned, and that, through sea power, nearly all the German Colonies had been conquered, escaped the close attention of the nation, whose eyes were longingly fixed on the glories of a Fleet action.

People asked: "What is wrong, where is our Nelson?" The Public only remained partly satisfied that the cause of the apparent inaction was due to the disinclination of the German Fleet to put to sea. Discontentedly and grumblingly they asked "Why it was not forced from their harbours?"; and looked each day to find that the German ships had been forced to come out and had given battle to our fleet. Then they confidently believed our day at last would have come—Trafalgar would be repeated, and ship after ship of the German Navy would be sent to the bottom.

Such were the uneducated hopes of the British nation.

In the early months of 1916 the day came—issue was joined and the battle fought. The news of the result spread dismay—apparently our fleet had been more damaged than that of the enemy. True, the latter had fled to their harbours and never came out again with any intention of fighting, but where was the victory, the crushing defeat so eagerly anticipated? Surely someone had blundered, and surely some gross mistake had been made? Time went on; the war was won; but still there remained a feeling that the chapters in Naval History written by our sailors in the war lacked the glory of those handed down by our ancestors.

Vainly have the more sober of our contemporary historians pointed out the essential differences in the conditions obtaining between the old-time sea conflicts and the late war. They have pointed out the strategical results that our Navy obtained, the steady policy and tactics pursued, and the absence of tactical and strategical gambling. Yet the feeling persists that the country was robbed of a glory which should have been equal to that earned in the days of our great-grandfathers, and which should have added lustre and prestige to the nation as a whole.

Explanations after an event always savour of excuse and meet with distrust; but in the case of the late war such distrust is not greater than that which would have greeted accurate forecast had it been made before

the war. Any attempt to educate the country in modern naval pre-war thought would have ended in failure. Human nature can rarely be brought to believe that which is unpalatable to its preconceptions. Belief is so largely a matter of inclination that actual occurrence is the only evidence that will break down fixed notions and pave the way for new ideas. To have preached in pre-war days that inaction of the sea-going fleet would be the commonplace, and battles the exception, would merely have provoked incredulity. Yet such has always been the case in war. The long blockades of the old wars were barely touched on in popular writings, since accounts of battles were the theme that stirred the populace. Hence the multitude pictured naval war as a succession of sea combats and not merely dull, commonplace sea coercion. But if in our pre-war desire to instruct we had gone still further, if we had asserted that modern conditions favoured, yea even necessitated, our fleets remaining the greater part of each year in harbour, so seemingly pusillanimous a contention would merely have provoked derision.

Now that the late war is becoming ancient history the minds of laymen are better prepared to consider dispassionately the real meaning of sea power and strategy. So much is this the case that they may even be prepared to acknowledge that a war at sea can be won without ever a fleet going to sea or a gun being fired.

To grasp the real significance of war and warlike operations, it is necessary to appreciate that all things living have at all times waged a war of existence. The inexorable law of animal life in the forest, to fight and be fought, to eat and be eaten, governs human nature in principle; although modified in its cruder aspect by civilization. Individuality in persons and nations necessitates rivalry in the struggle for existence; commerce is the modern battlefield for national rivalry. All countries carry on daily the war of rival commerce.

The First Essential

In the past, wholesale robbery, revenge, the lust of territorial possession, and the pride of rulers were the predominating causes of physical warfare. These are fast fading and may in time cease to exist; but the rivalry of commerce will remain as long as nations preserve their nationality, and until individuality is obliterated and altruism alone reigns in the world.

Commerce is the source of national wealth. Without trade no nation can exist; moreover the priority of countries in the councils of the world is regulated by the force behind them; this force can *au fond* be traced to wealth, and wealth is the offspring of commerce. The commerce of this country has been built up by adherence to sound principles, good judgment and bold enterprise. Its chief enemy has been and always will be a spirit of gambling. Our vast national resources in coal and iron have helped in the past; our national characteristics have turned these resources into wealth. The process has been slow; in fact so slow, that few at the time grasped the full significance of the victories we have gained in the past in our commercial war; nor even, owing to the slowness of their maturing, have we perceived that they were as surely victories to the country as those that are gained in battles in war.

Physical war is merely a sporadic outburst of national rivalry in a virulent form. Physical war and commercial war bear the same comparisons to each other as a violent conflagration does to slow decay; force must be met by force, scores of years of wealth accumulated in slow commercial war has to be drawn on and sacrificed to check the conflagration of physical war, and place a limit to its waste. But the same principles should underlie the conduct of violent war as those by which the slow commercial war is successfully carried on. Hence we should in physical war look for adherence to sound principles, mature judgment and justifiable boldness, but above all the absence of gambling due to the taking of unjustifiable risks. Yet so perverse is human nature, so ingrained are certain sentiments by heredity,

that boldness, even up to gambling, is apt to be more applauded than a safe policy. Physical prowess was a god worshipped by our ancestors and is still revered by us. Brain power in war then received, and still receives, scant acknowledgment. Vestiges of this ancient religion remain engraved in our minds and will not die for several generations to come. Deeds of daring, even if unsuccessful, make the pulse tingle and the human frame to glow. The glory of deeds done by a compatriot seems to reflect honour on each individual of a nation, so that each seems, to himself, to have been endowed with a bravery and valour which he values all the more, forsooth, if they happen to be totally absent from his physical equipment.

The emotional tendencies of a nation constitute a great danger in war. The unbalanced judgment of the masses, which sets a greater store on scintillating valiance than on drab soundness of strategy or tactics, is a great danger in physical war; and is, moreover, one which may be accentuated in the wars of the future. The first essential, therefore, in approaching the analysis of warlike operations is to put aside all emotional tendencies, to look on war as a matter of business, most vitally important business, to the nation. The younger and more irresponsible of the fighters can treat war as a game, or as a means of obtaining a reputation for gallantry, and for many reasons these feelings should be encouraged; but for those in high command, on whom the responsibility of this vital business of the nation rests, no such ideas are permissible. War to them must never be anything but a cool calculating business in which sentiment—except so far as sentiment in others increases morale—can find no place. If, therefore, we are to judge the proceedings of a war we must adopt a like course; each step taken must be judged solely from the standpoint of how it affected the general strategy of the war. The nation may revel in luxuries such as the charge of Balaclava, and similar feats of heroism; and to a certain extent such sporadic out-

breaks may at times be useful in keeping up the morale of a nation and inspiring the fighting forces; but they must be looked on as relaxations and extravagances, and not as part of the business of war. However much we may hanker after our pride being stimulated by accounts of heroism and gallantry in battle, we must, as critics, assess such pleasurable indulgences at their basic worth, and coldly inquire whether they did or did not assist us to win the war.

CHAPTER II

NELSON AND HIS TIMES

Conditions in 1805—Reasons for French decadence at sea—Battle of the first of June—Nelson—How Nelson of 1900 would differ from Nelson of 1800—His character—Unerring judgment in action—Battle of St. Vincent—Battle of the Nile—Foley's action—Nelson's action—Who doubled the line?—Copenhagen—Nelson *v.* Nelsonic spirit—Single-mindedness—His loyalty to his Commanders-in-Chief—Nelson touch—Nelson and the Grand Fleet.

THE latter portion of 1805 was one of suspense to the people of England. The great war with Napoleon had lasted with but brief intermission since 1793. On land the French arms had been victorious. Europe lay under the domination of the newly-crowned French Emperor. The war at sea, at first largely confined to a struggle to capture or retain colonies, had gradually assumed a more threatening aspect so far as invasion of England was concerned. Events had brought home to Napoleon that his real enemy was Great Britain. He had imposed his rule and peace, at will, on all the European nations except these islands, and it was they, who, with money and their fleet, energetically continued to oppose his autocratic assumption of ruling the destinies of Europe.

The two weapons at his disposal to reduce this country to obedience were actual invasion and commercial starvation. The former was that which appeared the most feasible, and it was this threat that lay most heavily over our nation. Our one hope for immunity from

the consummation of Napoleon's designs lay in the Navy. Our Navy was but slightly numerically stronger than that of the French Navy combined with those of the varying Allies of France. It was, therefore, fortunate for us that our Navy was at that time vastly superior to the French and every other European nation in sea experience. For a moment let us trace the causes that led to this superiority.

The great war which began in 1793 and which convulsed Europe for over twenty years, was the direct outcome of the French Revolution. The Revolution had shaken the structure of French social organization with violence, destroying both bad and good alike, and disorganizing all the public services; none of which suffered more than the French Navy.

In 1790 the French Navy was a service to be proud of: in 1794 it was a disorganized force. In Lord Howe's victory at the battle of the 1st of June, 1794, the three admirals and twenty-six captains of the French Fleet had three years before held the following positions:—

The Commander-in-Chief had been a lieutenant; of the two other admirals one had been a lieutenant and one a sub-lieutenant. Of the captains, three had been lieutenants, eleven sub-lieutenants, nine had been merchant ship officers, one a seaman in the navy, one a boatswain, and one unknown. The French Navy, therefore, was at that time as regards its officers in a thoroughly disorganized condition. As regards the men it was little better.

Mahan: "Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution," vol. I. p. 57.

Moreover, energetic action on the part of our naval authorities had instituted blockades off all the French naval ports. This was with a view to preventing the various units of their fleet leaving and combining without being brought to action; but it had a secondary and far-reaching effect, in that it imposed idleness on the crews of the French vessels, and denied them that constant practice and experience in handling and working sailing ships, as well as in gunnery, which was absolutely necessary for reasonable efficiency in action. With

us the blockade had the exact contrary effect: our ships were constantly at sea, sometimes for two years or more, always sailing, always practised in manœuvring and working the ships, reefing, trimming, shortening and making sail, until sea-lore was a commonplace. When the French fleet put to sea it was more or less a rabble. Unused to the motion, the men suffered from sea-sickness; but, beyond all, that feeling of accustomedness to sea work, and the confidence begotten by it, were absent. In its place a feeling of diffidence and uncertainty supervened, increased almost to despair by the early evidences of the inexperience of officers and crews as their vessels passed the heads of their ports and met the ocean swell and the shifting winds. It is useless to make a cavalry charge with raw recruits, or to fight a naval action in sailing ships with unpractised crews. Confidence is an asset of incalculable value to a fighting force, and this was even more so in the old sailing days when the whole crew were implicated in the sailing and handling of the ships, and often were called on to take a part in hand-to-hand fighting. In present years the handling of the ships is largely independent of the crew, who merely tend the oil fuel and keep an eye on the lubrication of the turbines or load the guns. The movements of the ship are controlled by one or at the most two officers, and the fire of the guns is, again, in the hands of half a dozen officers; the men merely load and lay the guns mechanically in obedience to the movements of certain pointers.

Such then was the condition of the French Navy in Nelson's time. It is well to keep these facts in mind when we look back on the old time victories. We may well be filled with admiration of the deeds of our old sea heroes, but at the same time we must give due weight to the conditions prevailing in those times which aided our seamen in gaining the sweeping victories that history has recorded, and which we are apt to ascribe solely to a superiority of courage or genius in our race.

Nelson and his Times

It is not infrequently the practice of modern writers to compare some existing popular naval officer with Nelson, and to judge the actions of others by what they call the "Nelsonic standard." Nelson was, and always will be, a unique personality; since much of the picturesqueness of his complex character was due to the conditions of the times in which he lived. Had Nelson lived in the twentieth century he would appear to those writers to be totally different to the Nelson of whom they write, and who lived in the early nineteenth century. The day of freedom of action has gone, wireless telegraphy and telegrams have destroyed the conditions which developed much of the independence of his character. Hand-to-hand combats have passed; little chance remains of exhibiting exceptional gallantry in an action. The fiery longing, the love of close combat can now be satisfied only on the rarest occasions chiefly in vessels of small value like destroyers, and would develop into a positive danger to the nation if indulged in by those in command of the more valuable vessels.

The kernel of Nelson's character would still remain if he were alive to-day: his devotion to duty and prompt decision, the result of earnest thought, would persist; but the conditions that would govern the use of these qualities in a modern navy would be so different that they would appear to be totally different attributes. The one predominant quality that Nelson exhibited, and which stamps him as a great sea commander, was a swift and unerring judgment and quick determination in a crisis in battle. He had many other high qualities as an officer: restless activity, a high sense of duty, a natural love of fighting, which, of course, endowed him with a personal gallantry conspicuous even in his own day of gallant fighters. Many others have possessed these qualities to as great an extent as Nelson, although perhaps they have not given expression in words or writing so fully to their feelings regarding duty and love of fighting as Nelson did through his

SOUTHERN BAPTIST

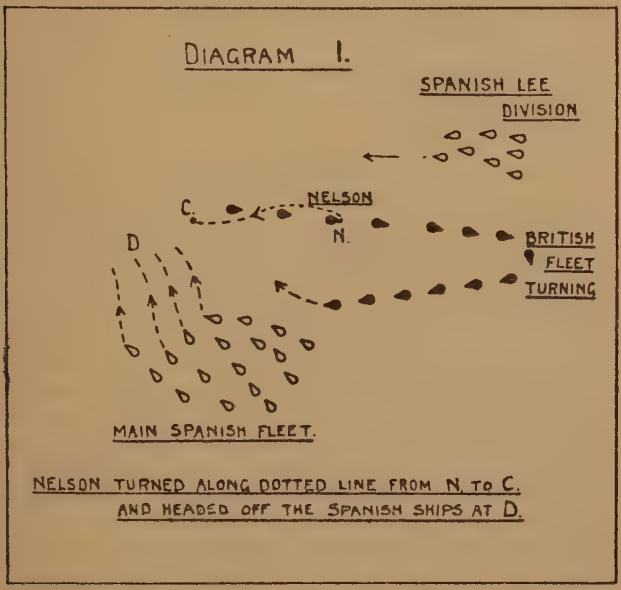
peculiar singleness of character. It is this constant repetition in correspondence and conversation, of "doing his duty" of "getting at the enemy" that reveal the constant thought and rumination over the problems that confronted him, and undoubtedly it was the constant thought over possibilities, and visualizing probable and possible conditions, that sharpened his natural rapidity of thought and caused him to recognize and to act instantly in a critical phase of an action.

Independence of action bred of profound belief in himself and his judgment, a most necessary quality in every officer, led him immediately to take the action he considered to be right. It is utterly improbable that Nelson, like many other officers, considered personal gallantry as anything but a matter of course. Thousands of officers would not hesitate to place themselves in positions of risk and danger when they considered such action necessary. Nelson never threw himself into a position of danger merely to exhibit his gallantry. He was to himself merely one of the whole of the men under him; to share with them the hazards that duty demanded—this is the correct spirit of an officer.

In every action at sea in which Nelson was engaged, he showed unerring judgment at some crisis. In the battle of Cape St. Vincent, his first fleet action, he commanded the *Captain*, and according to seniority he was stationed as the thirteenth ship in the line. Sir John Jervis, afterwards Lord St. Vincent, led the British line of battle down between two portions of the Spanish fleet which had become separated from each other—one lot of ships lay to *windward* of him, and the other lot of ships to *leeward*. Now in sailing days it took a long time for ships to *leeward* to beat up and join those to *windward*, since the wind was blowing dead against them, and they had to make long zigzags to reach the desired point. In fact, for a line-of-battle ship to reach a point three miles to windward, it had to sail approximately sixteen miles through the water. On the other hand, for ships to windward to join those

to leeward they had merely to steer straight for them and sail with the wind behind them at a quick rate.

When the Spaniards appreciated Jervis's design, the captains of the ships to windward altered course to join their detached unit to leeward, in order to reunite their fleet in one compact body and so defeat the British



tactics. Nelson saw their intention and at once appreciated the full measure of their manœuvre; without hesitation, he left the line of battle and threw his ship in the road of the ships bearing down, bringing his broadside to bear and raking the advancing ship. His resolute action miraculously stopped the remainder of the Spanish ships following the example of their leaders, and the success of Jervis's manœuvres was assured.

The ship next astern of Nelson followed suit and supported him.

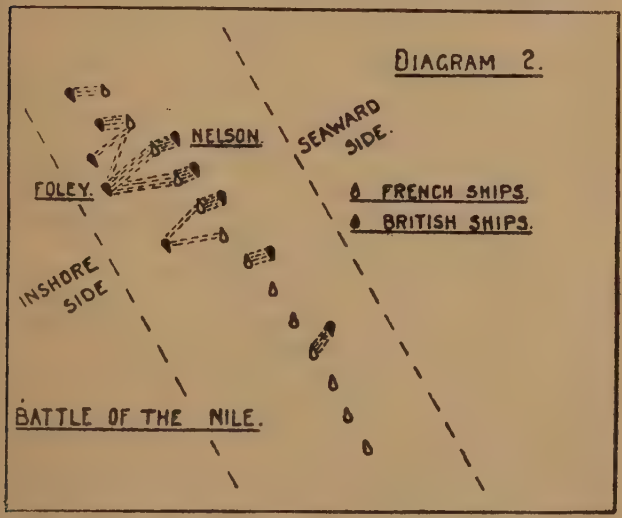
Now there is much food for thought on the details of this operation. Nelson exhibited a rapid appreciation of the crisis and prompt action in carrying out his decision. The captain next astern was equally gallant, but Nelson was solely responsible for the quickness of brain and independence of action that led to the brilliant manœuvre.

In discussing this action we must give due weight to the traditions of the times. To break out of the line might well have been considered by some admirals a deadly sin, and had the action been lost Nelson might have been made a scapegoat. It was his decision to do, against precedent, what he considered was right that showed a moral courage far more rare than mere gallantry. A man who merely lived in the present without daily analysing the past or visualizing the future, would have let the opportunity slip. Moral courage, prepared thought and accurate judgment were the attributes Nelson showed at the battle of St. Vincent.

Let us now pass over two years and turn to Nelson's next sea fight, that of Aboukir Bay, probably the most dramatic of all sea battles, fought at night, with all the weirdness of night fighting, where the grappling hand-to-hand struggle in the darkness was illumined by the flash of guns and explosions. The young Rear-Admiral, selected specially to command the fleet detached to watch the French in Toulon, had, through no fault of his own, let their vessels escape from that port in a gale. He had fruitlessly chased to the east to find them. Mortified in spirit, he was perfectly conscious that it was luck merely that had favoured their escape; but he also knew the ignorance of the British public and their avidity for blaming all but successful officers, and he felt his chances of serving his country, as he knew that with the right opportunity he could serve her, were slipping by. Just as he was giving up search in the east to try the western portion of the Mediterranean, the French

fleet was sighted at anchor in Aboukir Bay. He decided to attack at once, although darkness would be upon them before the battle could be decided. The deterrents to modern night fighting were all absent—no torpedoes or torpedo-craft existed; the enemy was at anchor, and there was no chance, therefore, of mistaking friend for foe.

Captain Foley led the line, and when approaching the French Fleet had one of those flashes of thought which



experience only can originate. The ships at anchor conjured up to his mind their swinging round their anchors at the full scope of their cables, and therefore he intuitively saw that there was enough water inshore of them to float his ship. The unpreparedness of guns on the disengaged side, because of the lumber which was often temporarily placed around them in the sudden emergency of a surprise fight, flashed into his mind. So without hesitation he led the line *inshore* of the enemy and

engaged them on their unprepared side. The next six ships followed him and passed inside, till Nelson, in the *Vanguard*, reached the head of the French line. Without hesitation he led the remainder *outside* and placed them to seaward of the enemy, thereby having roughly speaking one English ship on each side of each ship in the northern half of the French fleet ; and the southern half of that fleet was left with their broadsides pointing harmlessly to the east and west altogether out of the action, and totally unable to assist the head of the line, which was being so sorely engaged, and which was rapidly being crushed by the overwhelming force of a one to two fight.

Disputes have centred round the point as to whether Nelson or Foley doubled the line. Some, who have been unable to give credit to anyone but Nelson, have suggested that the situation had been previously discussed, and that Nelson had indicated the action to be followed. This is most unlikely, since there is no reason to suppose that Nelson ever anticipated fighting the French fleet at anchor—an utterly improbable situation. Let us give Foley the credit of leading the ships round to the disengaged side—a flash of genius bred of experience—but let us take the common-sense view that Foley never intended by his action to " double the line," that is to place one ship each side of each of the French vessels. That was due to Nelson's genius. As a sea officer, Nelson must have appreciated that Foley had given him the enormous advantage, the great initial advantage, of engaging the unprepared side of the enemy's vessels ; but, as a master of tactics he saw that every minute given to the enemy allowed the remaining French vessels to prepare the guns on their shoreward side for action ; and that the doubling of two of our ships to one of the enemy was fifty times more valuable than the temporary advantage that Foley's action had given to the leading vessels.

Let us note most carefully that Nelson's tactics were not what modern critics would call " Nelsonic " ; personal bravery was subordinated to the end to be achieved.

He did not disdain to place his ship, coming fresh and without a shot having been fired at her, alongside a half-beaten ship to complete her destruction. He did not dash in a fiery manner to engage a new and unattacked enemy; he did merely what his unerring judgment told him was the right course, one dictated by the brain and not the lust of the fighter.

Years elapsed and Nelson was in the North Sea, second-in-command to Sir Hyde Parker. He had reconnoitred the offing of Copenhagen and decided in his mind that he could attack and reduce the batteries. No previous attack of this nature had been tried on a grand scale; there was no previous experience to guide him and to enable him to appreciate the advantages that well-prepared shore positions possess against the attack of ships. He persuaded the Commander-in-Chief to allow him to make the attack with a portion of the fleet. Nothing was left to chance that could be done previous to the engagement. The passage was surveyed and all made ready. The fight began and its progress showed that the outcome was, to say the least, doubtful. Nelson's judgment suppressed his fighting ardour: he arranged an armistice and saved his squadron. Brain again, clear thought in the middle of a fierce fight saved the ships. Nelson showed himself in a new light; no similar deed had ever been done by a naval commander, but his unfaltering judgment in action suppressed his love of fighting. The course he followed can hardly again be called "Nelsonic" in the popular sense, but in no action has Nelson, as an admiral in command, shown greater brain power or judgment than at the Battle of Copenhagen.

One word in passing. The famous episode of Nelson disregarding Hyde Parker's signal to discontinue the action has its lessons. The Commander-in-Chief had given his consent to the undertaking—the attack was launched, and he had no right to cancel his permission unless some new information had reached him to cause him to reconsider the position; or unless conditions had

arisen whereby his portion of the fleet was compromised by the absence of Nelson's ships. Neither of these was possible, and therefore he had no right to get "cold feet" and cancel the operation—or perhaps since "cold feet" are constitutional, and it is out of the power of the individual to avoid them, he might bitterly regret having given his sanction—but it was his duty to maintain sufficient self-control not to hamper a subordinate to whom he had assigned a definite detached operation. Nelson's conduct in disregarding the signal was dictated by common sense. He knew his Commander-in-Chief, and we may let it rest at that: or, to put the matter in a nutshell, if St. Vincent had recalled him, Nelson would have put his telescope to his good eye for he would have known there was a reason for the signal, but his blind eye came into use with Hyde Parker because Nelson knew Hyde Parker.

The Battle of Trafalgar saw Nelson at his prime as a naval commander-in-chief. The years between the Battle of Copenhagen and 1805 had been full of experience and incident. He had had unique opportunities for making an accurate estimate of the French Navy and also the Spanish Navy as fighting forces, and on those estimates he was able to base the tactics of his fleet. The quiet of Merton had given him the opportunity of reviewing the past and of thoroughly analysing the busy years of the war. Whilst at Merton he evolved the future tactics of any fleet he would command. It is not difficult to trace the lasting impression made on him by the Battle of the Nile in his development of the "Nelson touch," as he loved to call his tactical scheme for a fleet action.

Briefly the scheme was to divide his fleet into two squadrons; to throw one half on to a lesser number of the enemy while he, with the other, took up a position to threaten the unengaged portion of the enemy's ships should they attempt to go to the succour of their engaged vessels.

Here again, we have the true Nelson spirit shown. Not the "Nelsonic spirit." He did not propose to

engage; he did not propose to rush helter-skelter into the action; but to remain clear of the fighting, because by so doing he was free to bring his natural judgment to bear, and to seize the critical moment when the disengaged section of the enemy might attempt to turn to assist their heavily beset comrades. His time for fighting would come later when the first stage of the battle was decided and he was free to hurl himself on the disengaged half of a fleet whose other half was beaten.

Let us then, above all, correct any mistaken ideas we may have imbibed from sensational writings about Nelson as a sea officer. He was not in any way merely "a bull at the gate" fighter; there were dozens of such men in the British Navy at that time who never rose above mere passing distinction. He was essentially a thinker and an organizer and a great leader of men.

Loyalty and single-mindedness were such marked features in his character that never would he have permitted anyone to let their adulation overstep the limits of propriety and seek to magnify Nelson at the expense of any of his Commanders-in-Chief.

His action at St. Vincent was that of a man who had a profound grasp of the essentials of fleet tactics, and the eye to size up the situation and to seize the opportunity. His doubling his ships on those of the enemy at the Nile and not disdaining to engage a ship already being engaged instead of choosing one that was not being fought, again stamps him as a tactician who could keep his thirst for glory under control. At Copenhagen his adroitness in getting his fleet out of what might have been a disastrous dilemma again shows an appreciation of when to fight and when to retire. He mastered every detail of supply, health and gunnery of his fleet; the men consequently were healthy and his ships could be relied on to shoot with considerable accuracy. Lastly, his tactic known as the "Nelson touch" was designed to keep half of the fleet under his immediate command, in reserve ready to help the other half and ward off any concentration on the part of the enemy. If, therefore, Nelson the great sea

officer had been in command of the Grand Fleet at Jutland, we may be perfectly certain of one thing; that he would have done nothing foolish, he would never have allowed any gallery display to lead him to risk the Grand Fleet, he would never have applied Trafalgar tactics to twentieth-century fighting. It is grossly libellous to imagine he would have done so. We may be quite sure that the sound tactic was the one that would have been followed by him instantly and on the spur of the moment.

CHAPTER III

SHIPS—GUNS—TORPEDOES—ARMOUR—PROJECTILES—SUBMARINES AND MINES

The *Iron Duke* compared with the *Victory*—The battleship—The armoured cruiser—The light cruiser—The Destroyer—Guns——Development since Trafalgar—Long-range hitting—Ranging and observation of fire—The predominating value of gunnery—The torpedo and its progress—The gyroscope—The torpedo in action against a line of ships—When ships chase—Destroyer attacks—Armour—Its progress—Difficulty of testing armour and shell—The cause of the loss of our battle cruisers—Submarines—The proper tactics to defeat submarine attacks—Mines in battle.

ALL of us have some conception, more or less, of the size of a modern battleship, but it is interesting to compare the *Victory*, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar, with the *Iron Duke*, Lord Jellicoe's flagship at Jutland.

The *Victory* cost one hundred thousand pounds, the *Iron Duke* two million and eighty thousand pounds, or twenty *Victorys* could be built for the cost of the *Iron Duke*.

The tonnage of the *Victory* was 2,500 tons, that of the *Iron Duke* 25,000, or ten times as much. The length of the *Victory* was 200 feet, and that of the *Iron Duke* 600 feet.

Now a few words about the different kinds of ships used in battlefleet actions. We will for clearness omit the subsidiary uses of such vessels.

The battleship is the strongest vessel afloat, that is, it has more guns and heavier armour than any other class of ship. It therefore has to be slower in speed than the

more lightly armed and protected vessels, since it is impossible in a limited size of ship to have all the great qualities.

The battleship, therefore, is a hard nut to crack, and a fleet of such ships forms a solid rampart of sea power. Enemy's vessels that are not equal in strength to the battlefleet cannot count on remaining at any place without being chased away or fought by the battlefleet; and the battlefleet provides protection for its own more lightly-armed vessels to run to.

It is this concentrated power that invests a battlefleet with the ability to control oversea operations; as, for instance, the invasion of a country. Invasion can only be successful if subsequent sea-communication can be maintained between the mother country and the troops landed. The transports may, in the first place, have evaded hostile sea forces; but should the enemy's battlefleet be strong enough to dominate the line of sea-communication, no reinforcements, ammunition or other supplies can be sent to the force landed.

The value of our battlefleet in the late war was well shown by the fact that, since the German battlefleet was thoroughly dominated by Admiral Jellicoe, our merchant vessels could use all the waters of the world with practically complete freedom from ship attack.

The battle cruiser is less heavily armed and less heavily armoured than the battleship, but it is faster. Its chief function is to scout and get in touch with the enemy and convey any information gained to the Commander-in-Chief of the battlefleet, and of course, incidentally, to chase and fight enemy fast cruisers. The origin and original intention of the battle cruiser was to provide a fast ship able to push home a reconnaissance through and past the enemy's cruisers.

Battle cruisers cannot usefully fight in the line of battle against battleships on account of their weaker gun-fire and poor armour protection; but they can dominate the situation outside the line by controlling the activities of the enemy's cruisers and destroyers. Also during an

action, by keeping in close touch with the enemy they can inform the Commander-in-Chief of his every movement.

Battle cruisers can only take a direct part in a battle-fleet action if, by virtue of their speed, they have attained a position where they are at considerable tactical advantage; but such occasions are rare, since, usually, attempts of this nature can be frustrated by a watchful enemy.

The lighter cruisers are mainly of use for scouting purposes, backing up destroyers and assisting to ward off enemy destroyer attacks.

The destroyer is a fast vessel that carries its torpedoes to a place where they can be discharged at the enemy's fleet with advantage. It engages and fights enemy destroyers attempting similar attacks on its own fleet or ships. It is the deadly enemy of the submarine. Destroyers are the main defence of a fleet against submarine boat attack. A submarine hates a destroyer more than a cat hates a terrier. Not only can the destroyer ram, but it carries explosive charges to drop on the back of the submarine—a most unpleasant form of attack.

Although a battleship is the strongest unit offensively, it is weak defensively against torpedo attack. A fleet, therefore, is accompanied by destroyers to make up for this inherent weakness.

The above are the only classes of vessels that we need mention in connection with the Battle of Jutland.

Now about guns.

It would take fifty of the guns carried by the *Victory* to supply sufficient iron to make the steel for one of the large guns of the *Iron Duke;* and forty-six of the round shot of Trafalgar days would be required to make one modern heavy projectile. But the advance of weight in guns from 2¾ tons to 103 tons, and from a projectile of 30 lbs. to one weighing close on 1,400 lbs. had small effect on naval tactics compared with the increase in range of the guns that took place between Trafalgar and Jutland. The heaviest gun fired at Trafalgar had a maximum

range of 3,000 yards, and was extraordinarily inaccurate at such a range; at Jutland 20,000 yards could have been obtained. About five hundred yards was considered to be a fighting range at the time Trafalgar was fought; now no action would be fought under 12,000 yards, and 15,000 yards would be the usual distance.

The difficulty of hitting a ship at long ranges is due to the impossibility of seeing exactly in what position, as regards the enemy fired at, the projectile that was last fired fell. It is obviously useless to fire away round after round if all of them are falling to the right or left, or short of or over the ship fired at.

We can all appreciate that it is easy to see if the splash made by a projectile on striking the water is *in line* with the ship fired at; and should it happen to be in line, whether the splash was between us and the ship or beyond the ship. We can also appreciate that at seven miles distance it would be impossible to say whether a splash that was between us and the ship was 1,000 or 50 yards short of her; or, if the splash was the other side of the ship, if it was 50 or 1,000 yards over her.

Now when a broadside, say, of five shell, is fired (all the guns being aimed at the same object), all the shell fortunately do not drop into the same hole in the water; there is a certain *spread*, some are beyond the others, some to the right or left of the others. It is this *spread* that enables *ranging* to be carried out. If all the splashes are seen to be *short* of the ship, the next time a broadside, or *salvo*, as it is called, is fired, the range is put up, say, 500 yards. If still all are short, another 500 yards is added to the range. If the next *salvo* puts them all *over* then the range is dropped until some of the splashes are seen to be *over* and others to be *short*. Then the spotting officer says "Hurrah," for he has got the enemy's ship right into the middle of his salvo, and some of the shell will hit her.

Many other calculations to allow for the change of the position of the enemy between salvos and during the time the projectile is going through the air, are

necessary to get good shooting, but into these we need not enter.

Now the aim and object of every good gunnery officer is to get his guns adjusted so that they make as *close a pattern* as possible. This and constant practice on the part of the control and spotting officers is necessary for a ship to hit another frequently at long range.

Well, believe me, from the point of view of winning an engagement, practice, brainwork and gunnery training are worth all the effervescent gallantry in the world. A battlefleet action in these days is no affair of mere gallantry: it is a pure case of recognizing chances and profiting by the training, practice and experience that those in command have bestowed on the fleet. You may have the most gallant admiral ever born in command of a fleet in these days, but his gallantry is worth nothing in comparison with a cool brain to calculate chances, and the gunnery excellence that he has instilled into his command by constant training. The blame for failure of ships to shoot well must fall on the admiral; others may be and, of course, are responsible as well, but the success or failure of an admiral in command of a fleet in these days must, *inter alia*, be judged by the hitting power of his fleet. It is his business to see that his ships are able to shoot accurately, and he cannot be held free of blame if they fail.

And now for the torpedo.

Although fifteen years before Trafalgar was fought a steamboat was carrying passengers above water, it was not for sixty-five years after that battle that the below-water Whitehead locomotive torpedo was invented.

It is impossible here to deal with the fascinating story of the improvements in that weapon from a baby going seven miles an hour for a range of 350 yards and carrying a charge of 40 lbs. of black powder, to the monsters of Jutland going 25 knots for a range of 10,000 to 15,000 yards and carrying a charge of 300 lbs. of high explosive.

In the early days, although a torpedo, when once it

had settled down on its run, would keep an even depth of 10 or 15 feet below the surface of the water without any considerable variation, its accuracy of running in a given direction left a good deal to be desired. It was, in fact, very inaccurate in direction until a gyroscope was adapted for use in its inside, which corrected any tendency to curve or deflect from the direction in which it was originally discharged. The result of this and many other improvements was that at Jutland the torpedo was a weapon that could run with reasonable accuracy for about 15,000 yards and explode a charge of 300 lbs. of high explosive below the water-line of a ship.

The speed of a torpedo through the water is very slow compared with the velocity of the modern projectile through the air, namely, about 50 feet per second for the torpedo, while the average velocity of a modern projectile is somewhere about 2,000 feet per second.

It is difficult enough to judge the position of a ship during the time a projectile is flying through the air when firing at long ranges, but it is infinitely more difficult to do so in the case of a torpedo travelling through the water. It would in fact take a torpedo ten minutes to traverse a range of 10,000 yards, and it is quite impossible to forecast where a ship would be after an interval of ten minutes in a naval action. Moreover, although the gyroscope straightens the running of a torpedo, it cannot be expected to keep it straight enough to hit a single ship only 200 yards long at a distance of 10,000 yards. The torpedo may therefore be written down as useless in a single-ship action at modern fighting ranges. When, however, a fleet comes to be the target the conditions are totally changed, since no longer is the object a single ship, but the target becomes a line of many ships. Let us see how this works out.

Take the example of the Grand Fleet, say with 24 battleships each about 600 feet or 200 yards long. The space from the bow of one ship to the bow of the next, A, B, was about 500 yards; the length of each

ship, A, C, was 200 yards, so that the length of the space C, B was 300 yards.

Now it is easy to see that the whole line of ships from A to Z form one long target with 24 ships each 200 yards long, or 4,800 yards of ships.

The total length of the target was, therefore, 11,700 yards, of which 4,800 were vulnerable ships and 6,900 yards was blank space.

The chances of hitting 4,800 yards of ship compared with 6,900 yards of blank is as 48 is to 69, or nearly as two is to three, so that out of every five torpedoes fired at such a line of ships, two should hit ships and three should pass through the blanks.

Moreover the line is so long, nearly 12,000 yards, that

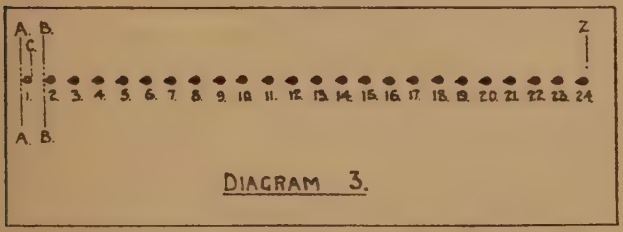


DIAGRAM 3.

if a torpedo were fired at the centre of the line from a distance of 10,000 yards it would have to be deflected 30 degrees to the right or left in order to miss the line all together.

If we have thoroughly grasped that the chances were that two torpedoes out of every five that were fired from 10,000 yards distance would hit ships of the Grand Fleet in single-line-follow-my-leader formation, we must agree that here was a very real and live danger and one which required all the wits of the Navy to minimize.

Well, of course, the problem had been discussed between Naval officers for several years prior to Jutland, and Admiral Jellicoe decided, with the concurrence of all the other admirals, that the best means of defeating

such an attack was to turn the ships *away* from an attack if the torpedo were fired from any position between abeam and half way to right-ahead.

This method of defeating torpedo attacks was used by :

III. 381 Admiral Jellicoe in the battle of Jutland, phase III.
II. 95 Admiral Beatty at the Dogger Bank action.
III. 326 Again by him on the way out to Jutland.
III. 377 Admiral Sturdee during phase III. at Jutland.
III. 338 Vice-Admiral Evan Thomas, phase I., Jutland.
J. P. 101 Admiral Burney at Jutland, phase III.
III. 353 Rear-Admiral Horace Hood, Jutland, phase II.
III. 339 Admiral Hipper, Jutland, phase I.

This matter will be referred to later; enough has been said here to show that the practice was a general and, we may add, a successful one.

Now let us consider another point, namely, the use of the torpedo when one fleet chases another.

The torpedo has a speed of thirty knots. A fleet chasing another or being chased by another has a speed of about 20 knots.

A torpedo fired in a right-ahead direction by the chasing fleet towards a fleet they were chasing would, of course, still run its 15,000 yards through the water, but the fleet chased would be running at 20 knots speed away from the torpedo. The torpedo would run for 15 minutes, during which time the ships would have gone 10,000 yards, so that the torpedo would only have gained the difference between its 15,000 and ships 10,000 yards, or 5,000 yards, before its fuel would be exhausted and it would stop.

So it would be no good during such a chase for the chasing ships to fire at ships more than 5,000 yards ahead of them ; and as no ship would ever be as close as this without being sunk by gun fire, the torpedo may be looked on as a useless weapon to a fleet that is chasing another.

The opposite is true for the fleet chased ; for the ships that are chasing are steaming up towards the torpedo

fired from the fleet that is being chased ; so the distance the torpedo could run would be its own 15,000 yards *plus* the 10,000 yards of the ships steaming towards it, or 25,000 yards. It is therefore conceivable that a torpedo might be fired at 25,000 yards distance and still hit a pursuing ship. Of course this is an extreme case and not likely to happen in practice, but it is well to remember that the torpedoes of a fleet chasing have a maximum range of 5,000 yards, but those of the fleet chased have a possible range of 25,000 yards. The same principle applies when one ship is somewhat in front of, but not right-ahead of, another.

If a ship A (Diagram 4) fires a torpedo in order to hit B, she does not aim at B, but at a point C, where

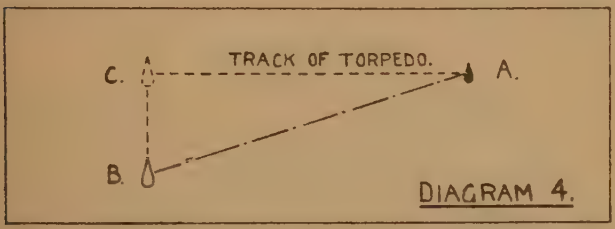


DIAGRAM 4.

B will be when the torpedo reaches her. Naturally the distance A C is less than A B which is the distance B was from A when the torpedo was fired. In fact B is steaming somewhat to meet the torpedo.

But if (Diagram 5) B fires a torpedo at A, she will have to aim well ahead of A, so that the torpedo will have to steam the distance B C while A steams A C, a very much greater distance than A was from B when the torpedo was fired.

One last point in connection with torpedoes that we must firmly fix in our minds is that the destroyer *plus* its torpedo is particularly deadly to the fleet that is chasing another. Imagine a torpedo attack on a chasing fleet of many ships with destroyers sent back from a chased fleet.

First we have the smoke of the chased fleet which hides the commencement of the attack. In the case of Jutland we would have had mist to help this.

Next the destroyers would steam at thirty knots speed towards the fleet, which would be coming up at twenty knots, or their rate of approaching one another would be fifty knots.

If the fleets were 14,000 yards apart the destroyers would arrive in among the chasing fleet in eight and a half minutes; but they could fire their torpedoes long before this. They could fire with terrible accuracy when they were 6,000 yards off, or about three and a

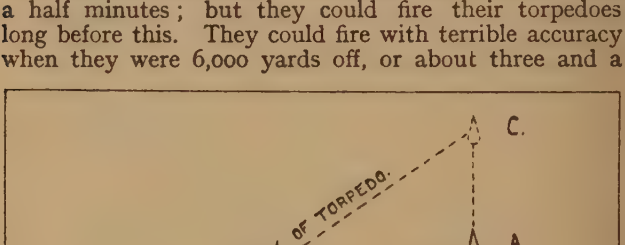


DIAGRAM 5.

half minutes after they had left their own fleet. Not much time would be available for the chasing fleet to avoid the attack, especially in misty weather with volumes of smoke hiding the attack.

Diagram 6 gives an idea of such an attack.

Now if the ships kept on their chasing course they would advance from B C to A D, and the torpedo would find a good target if fired at the angle as shown. If they turned at right angles to the attack (Diagram 7) they would give the good old follow-the-leader target two in five chance of hitting.

Page 27.

If the ships appreciated in time that the attack was being made and turned away from the attack they would lose ten minutes at the very least, and before

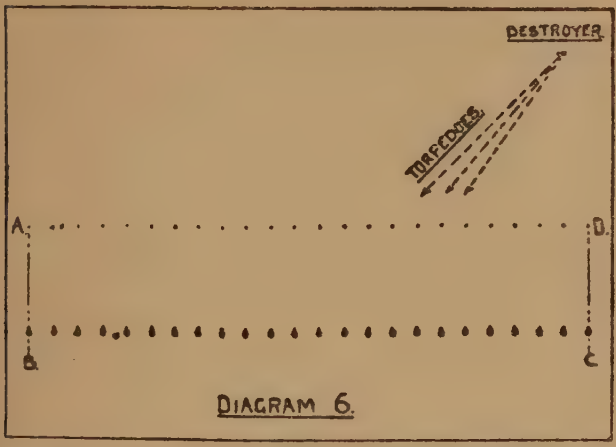


DIAGRAM 6.

they could get back again on to their chasing course the fleet chased would have increased their distance by at least 10,000 yards. (Diagram 8.)

So all the advantage of torpedo fire both from the ships and also from destroyers is with the fleet chased, and such attack is a very great menace to the chasing fleet.

This point will be referred to again later.

To recapitulate :

(1) The chances are that two torpedoes out of every five, if fired at about 10,000 yards, will hit ships in

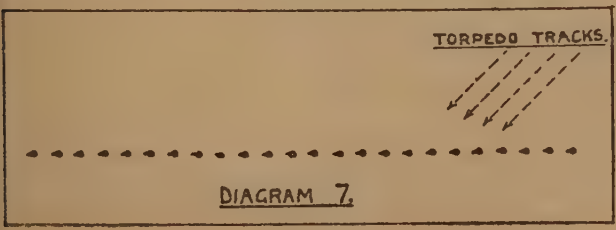


DIAGRAM 7.

a fleet in single-line-follow-my-leader formation. This constitutes a very great danger to a fleet.

(2) This was so serious a menace that the manœuvre generally adopted by the admirals of the Grand Fleet and battle cruisers was to turn the large ships away from such an attack if the attack came from any direction except right-ahead or within thirty degrees of right-ahead.

(3) The torpedo is useless to a fleet chasing, but a very deadly and valuable weapon to a fleet being chased.

Now a few words about armour and projectiles.

In " Trafalgar days " the sides of a battleship were

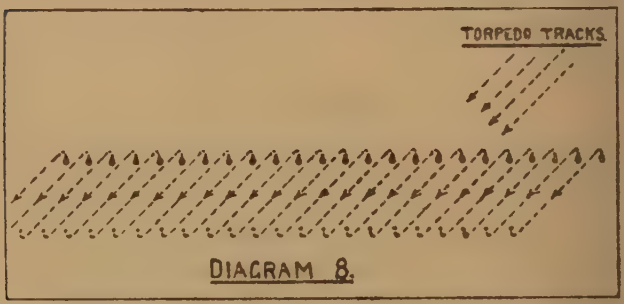


DIAGRAM 8.

made thicker than those of a frigate ; so that an elementary idea of armour existed even then. The advent of iron afforded a material of greater protective efficiency than wood. Then steel followed on iron. But through the successive stages of development of armour the gun and projectile kept pace. Chilled shell pierced steel armour, and the greater velocity given to the projectile by improved guns, in turn, enabled them to pierce and defeat increase in thickness of the armour plates.

At last a climax was reached with Krupp cemented armour plates and cunningly hardened projectiles. This armour had a very hard chilled surface which tended to break up the projectile, but the back of the

plate was made very tough to drag on it and stop it while it was forcing its way through.

In turn, shell were given soft steel caps fitted to their hardened points to afford lateral support to the delicate point while it pierced through the hardened steel face of the armour. And so this beggar-my-neighbour went on.

Now a great difficulty always faced the constructor and ordnance officer when they came to test armour or shell.

The only practical method of testing a plate was to fire at it; this destroyed the plate. And the only practical method of testing the projectile was to fire it at an armour plate, and this irretrievably damaged the shell. So a compromise had to be arranged. One out of a batch of plates destined for a ship was taken by hazard and fired at; if this test proved to be satisfactory, then all were passed as probably correct. But even such a test was subject to doubt as to whether the shell fired was of standard quality. So doubt crept in in spite of every precaution.

A similar procedure was carried out with the shell. One or more of each "cast" of steel was selected and fired at a plate at a prearranged velocity. If these went through, all were passed; if they failed another sample was tried, and if that failed all the cast were condemned. Again doubt was introduced, as it was always possible that the plate might be rather weak or else a specially good one. Still no better system could be devised. Of course there were border-line failures, that is, a projectile might just fail to get entirely through, or a plate just, and only just, fail to keep a projectile out. These failures received special consideration. The whole system left doubt, but no better methods of test have as yet been devised.

Speaking personally, and I dare say many other officers shared the same feelings, I had a haunting fear that an enemy might in peace time develop some invention or improvement and keep it up his sleeve ready to be

produced when we went to war. Guns, armour, shell, propellants, torpedoes, all presented chances of some secret.

I think we may claim that in gunnery efficiency our battleships had a decided superiority. The only matter in which the Germans had the advantage of us was in the penetrating power of their armour-piercing projectiles when striking armour at an oblique angle. This superiority was obtained by thickening the walls of the shell and therefore it entailed sacrificing the amount of bursting charge contained in the inside cavity.

The constructive reason for the tragic loss of the *Inflexible*, *Queen Mary* and *Invincible*, when each of these ships blew up with a terrible explosion, requires a word of explanation.

In modern ships the heavy guns are mounted in turrets; there are generally two guns in each turret. Immediately below the turret is a circular chamber called the working chamber; and as a continuation of this a central tube some twelve feet in diameter goes right down to the bottom of the ship. All these three units, the turret, the working chamber, and the central hoist-tube, move together as the turret is swung round by the trainers to keep the guns pointing on the enemy. In the process of loading, a cordite charge is taken from the magazine, which is close at hand, and placed in the tray of a hoist in the central tube. A shell is placed into another tray in the same hoist, and up they go to the working chamber. Here they are transferred to *waiting* trays, where they lie ready to be placed in another hoist which takes them up immediately behind the gun. The hoists in the working chamber have " flash doors " fitted to them to prevent flames finding their way down the central tube to the magazine.

There is no doubt that, when one or two charges were ignited by a shell bursting in the turrets of these doomed ships, the flash forced its way past the flash doors in the working chamber and penetrated down the central hoist, probably igniting a charge there, and so on down to the

magazine. Or perhaps a direct explosion of a German projectile in close vicinity to the magazine itself may have occasioned the disaster.

A similar fate nearly overtook one of the German armoured cruisers in the Dogger Bank action. So, before the Battle of Jutland, alterations in the German magazine approaches were made which did away with the danger. Unfortunately the Dogger Bank action did not reveal to us our weakness in this respect, so that no warning was given as to the doom that threatened the existence of our large ships in action.

A word about submarines.

Submarine attack differs from destroyer attack in that it is essentially a short-range attack; moreover, is made by isolated vessels and not in mass as with destroyers. If submarines attempted to work in flotillas they would be continually bumping into each other; in fact it would be a game of blind-man's buff.

The essence of defeating submarine boat attack is to turn *towards* the boat whenever possible, and by the threat of ramming to put it off its stroke. The whole principle of the disposition of escort destroyers is to place them in such positions that the submarine is in danger of being rammed should it take up the most favourable position for attack. Any officer of experience would turn towards a submarine attack if the boat was between right-ahead and 30 degrees before his beam and away from it if 30 degrees abaft his beam. Between 30 degrees before and 30 degrees abaft it does not matter much which way he turns.

In turning *towards* an attack made by a submarine before the beam the quickest means are being taken of reducing the size of the target your ship presents to the torpedo; and by turning *away* from a submarine attack abaft the beam the same result is obtained.

Mines.

It will be found that mines are referred to in connection with destroyers. The Germans were known to have practised laying mines from their destroyers, and also

from certain of their large ships, with the idea of dropping them in the path of an advancing fleet in order to blow up the leading ships. It was therefore well, as far as possible, to avoid steering up water through which the enemy's ships had recently passed.

CHAPTER IV

A FEW SIMPLE MANŒUVRES

How the ships of a fleet are arranged—Simplest form for cruising in war time—For battle—How ships are spaced apart—Deployment—How fleets are sidled towards or away from an enemy——Gun fire and tactics—How the guns of a ship are arranged—Limits to the direction in which guns can be fired—How this limits the approach of ships—Crossing the T—Tactical advantage and disadvantage—Direct deployment—Definition of chasing.

IN order to understand the Battle of Jutland it is necessary to master a few of the elementary movements of a fleet. These are very simple, in fact only matters of common sense.

Suppose you were in command of 24 large battleships, how would you arrange them?

Well, the simplest way would be in a single "follow-my-leader" line. This is the simplest formation, since the leading ship steers any course it may wish and the others follow on behind, each keeping the proper distance from the ship in front of it.

What is the proper distance for the ships to be apart? Naturally the least distance at which it is safe to manœuvre; because the nearer the ships are together the shorter and less unwieldy the line. Experience has fixed this distance at a little more than double the length of a single ship, or 500 yards.

Now the first thing that strikes us about our single line of ships is that the length of a line of 24 ships will

be great, nearly 24 times 500 yards.* That is 12,000 yards or six sea miles. Rather a long serpent to trail about the sea! Moreover, as we have seen, a long line of ships is open to very deadly torpedo attack; two hits out of every five torpedoes fired; so, naturally, when cruising about in war time, when submarines may be met with at any moment, some more compact arrangement is desirable.

You may say, Why not arrange them in a line so that

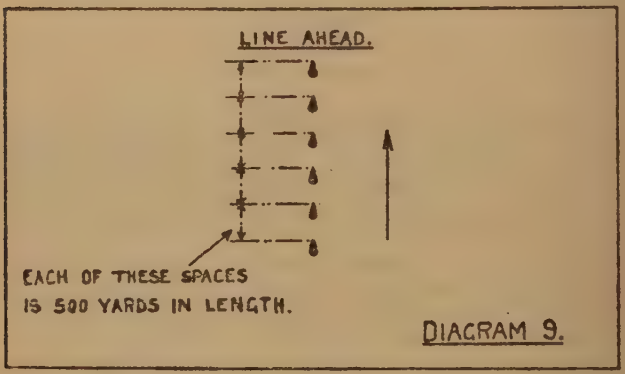


DIAGRAM 9.

all the ships are abreast of each other like soldiers marching in line across a barrack square?

Well, the answer is that it is very difficult to keep accurate station when steaming like this, and experience has led to this method of progression being rarely adopted. Some half-way house is better.

Now two lines of ships would still leave the fleet three miles long; and to cut the matter, like the fleet, short, six lines of four ships each, is the formation adopted for 24 ships.

* The distance from the bow of the leading ship to the bow of the last ship would be 23 times 500 yards, but the length of the last ship has to be added to this. Moreover, a line of ships is always a little longer than the exact mathematical length.

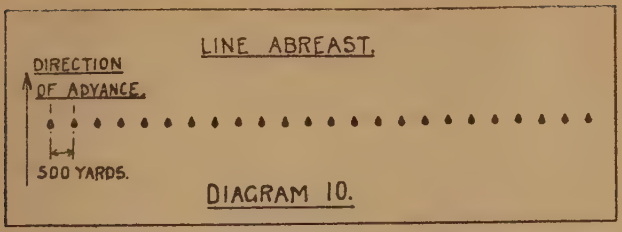


DIAGRAM 10.

In this formation it is not difficult for the six leaders (each shown by a flag) to keep good station on each other; each lot of four ships finds the follow-my-leader station-keeping simplicity itself, and the length of the side of the fleet, that part open to torpedo attack, is reduced to one mile in length.

So that, had you been up in an aeroplane and seen the battleships of the Grand Fleet cruising, you would have seen them arranged like the six teeth of a comb without a back to it, each tooth being made up of four ships.

Now what would you say the right distance should be for each of these six leaders to be apart ?

Naturally it might be necessary at any moment to bring the three ships up from behind each leader to form a single line, so the distance between each leader should

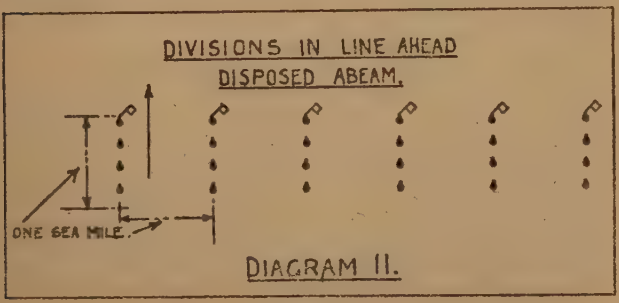


DIAGRAM 11.

be the distance three ships should take up, or the same as a line of four ships, or nearly one mile.

So our fleet now is, for cruising purposes, formed into an oblong measuring five miles along its least vulnerable side, and one mile on the side vulnerable to torpedo attack.

Now, although for cruising purposes such a formation is excellent, it is a hopeless one for fighting. Stick a pin to represent an enemy in any direction you like, say a foot away from Diagram 11, and you will see that a number of the ships could not fire at the pin without firing over their friends, who in turn would be obscuring clear

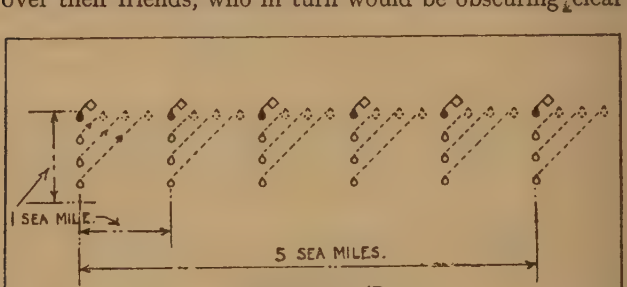


DIAGRAM 12.

vision with their hulls or smoke. No! to get clear gun fire for each ship we must go back to a " single line follow-my-leader " formation.

Now stick a pin away on the side of Diagram 9 and you will see that every ship can get all her guns pointing on an enemy away out on either side of the line of ships, with nothing in between to interfere with clear vision.

Now how can we get from our six-teeth-of-a-comb formation into single line by a follow-my-leader method? (For follow-my-leader is the simplest method of keeping accurate station.) Well, it is quite simple. Suppose we tell the leader of the left-hand tooth, shown as A in Diagram 13, to go straight on as if nothing was happening,

DIAGRAM 13.

and all the other leaders to turn to the left at right angles to the course on which they had been steaming. The distance between A and B we have seen was one mile, or a little more than the length of the line A C. Therefore C will be clear by the time D gets to the line A C, and D can turn up behind C.

Now if each ship in each of the five teeth follows its leader exactly, the whole come, first into a line D E, then each ship again turns up as it comes behind the line A C. So in the end a single line is formed behind the leader A, who is still steering on the same course the fleet was on when in its cruising formation.

Now the double wriggle from the teeth-of-the-comb to single line is called *deployment*. It is absolutely necessary to grasp the manœuvre thoroughly to understand a much disputed point in the Battle of Jutland.

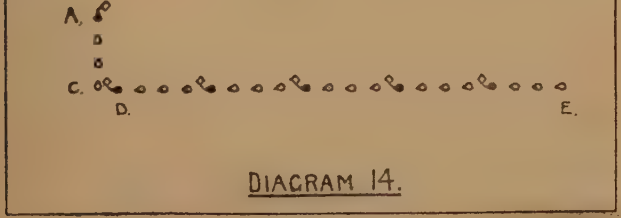


DIAGRAM 14.

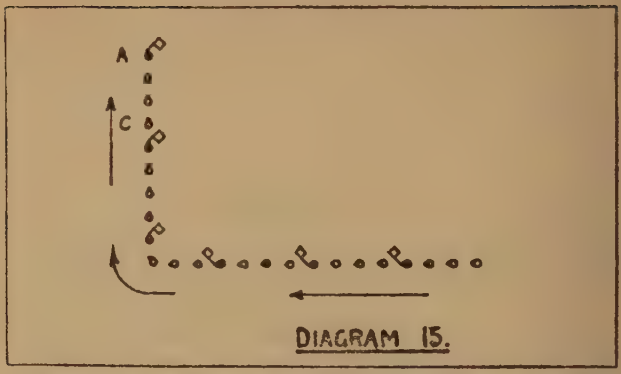


DIAGRAM 15.

It would have been equally easy to have done the manœuvre by telling the leader of the right-hand tooth to go straight on, and the other leaders to turn *right* instead of *left*. All the other ships would then have ended behind the right-hand tooth instead of the left-hand tooth; and in the end the only difference between the positions of the fleet in the two cases would have been that, after forming on the right tooth, it would be five miles more to the right than when it formed on the left-hand tooth.

One more small matter; namely, what is the time taken

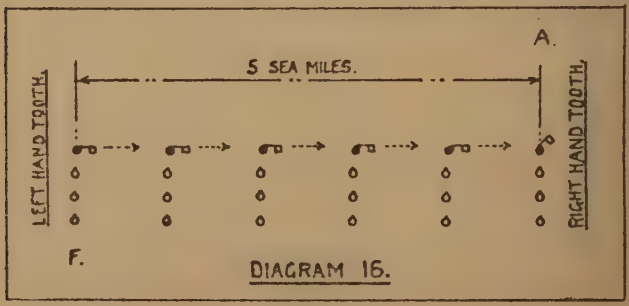


DIAGRAM 16.

by the manœuvre? Well, suppose the ships to steam 20 miles per hour, the last ship F would have to traverse a distance equal to the length of the whole line of 24 ships, or six miles. Now 20 miles per hour is the same as one mile in every three minutes, so the manœuvre would take 18 minutes to complete; quite a long time if by any chance you were in a hurry to fight the enemy.

We have now brought all the ships into single line ready to fight the enemy; and we have the ships that were the leaders of each tooth of the comb (the ones with the flag) spread along the line, each with their three ships behind them, so if we want to "sidle" the whole fleet to-

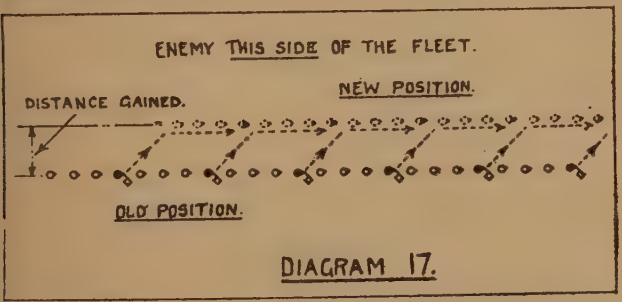


DIAGRAM 17.

wards or away from the enemy we can tell each leader to turn a small amount towards or away, to the right or left, and their own ships to follow them; and when the desired amount *to* or *from* the enemy has been gained we tell the leaders again to turn together back to the old direction and their ships to follow them round. Our single line will then again be formed, but the fleet has been sidled to the right or left.

One word about gunnery as allied to tactics.

Battleship tactics are mainly the hand-maiden of gunnery: they exist to help to bring the greatest volume of *hitting* on to the enemy. As the volume of hitting not only depends on volume of fire, but also on the accuracy of that fire, the less ships are swung about at

the time they are firing at the enemy the better. Hence violent alterations of course while the ships are actually engaged are bad.

It may seem natural to the layman to say perhaps if A B C suddenly sight D E F out of the mist, why not turn on them at once and try and squeeze closer quickly in that way?

The reason is that by so doing you would give the enemy two great points of advantage.

First, your own hitting would be entirely upset while your ships were swinging round; and all this time the

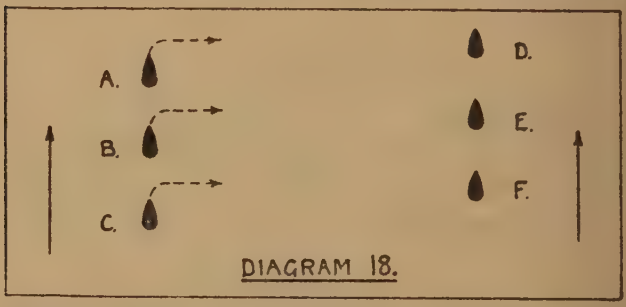


DIAGRAM 18.

enemy's hitting would be helped by your slow advance from the point at which you were turning.

Secondly, you would only have your four right-ahead guns bearing on the enemy instead of the ten you could get on the broadside; and all the time you would be slated by the ten guns of each of the enemy's ships.

So, although at first sight such a proposal might appear seductive, second thoughts, and abstention, are by far the best.

Let us now look at how the guns in a ship are placed. Take a deck plan of the *Iron Duke* as she would look if viewed from an aeroplane:

Now it is necessary to have the funnels and masts and other obstructions on the upper deck of ships; these are

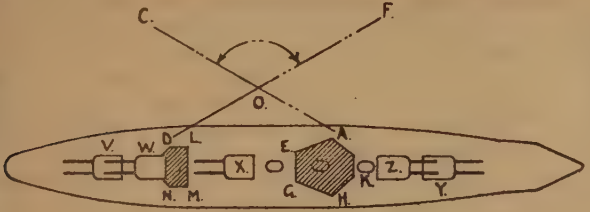


DIAGRAM 19.

reduced to a minimum, but they still exist; they are shown by the shaded parts at A E G H K, D L M N.

The guns cannot fire through these, so that the arc of gun fire is limited. Hence in firing ahead W turret is checked by D L M, and X turret is checked by A E G H K. The same obstruction checks Z turret in firing astern.

Speaking roughly the whole of the gun fire of a ship can only be obtained through the arc of C O F, which is approximately from 60 degrees before to 60 degrees abaft the beam.

Any ship visible in a direction between D F and right-ahead cannot be shot at by W turret, V turret or K turret.

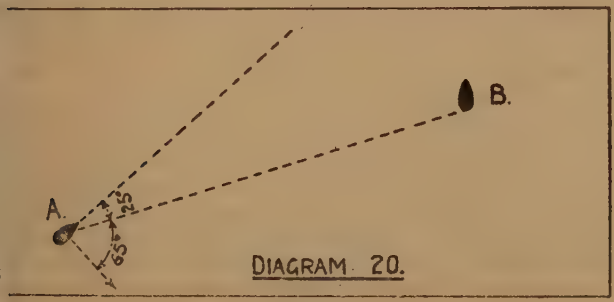


DIAGRAM 20.

This has a very important bearing on tactics, for obviously if A sights an enemy B (Diagram 20), the enemy B can shoot at A with all his guns ; whereas A can shoot at him with only the four guns that point ahead. A will therefore turn at once till all his guns will bear (Diagram 21). B will probably turn up parallel to A also and still keep all his guns bearing on A, and A cannot get closer to B unless he steams faster than B can. But B being ahead of A is in a better position to fire torpedoes at A.

So remember, a ship is not able to close on an enemy merely because he is sighted ahead, unless the ship foolishly likes to allow ten guns to fire at her while she

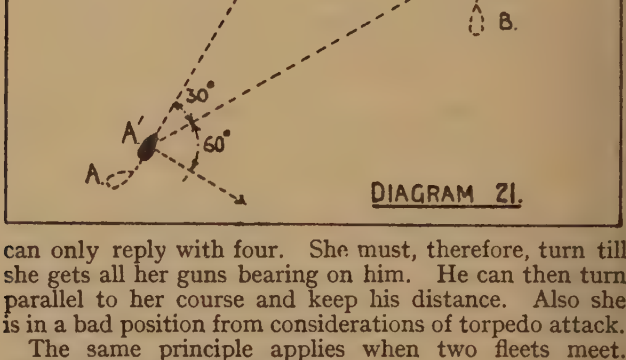


DIAGRAM 21.

can only reply with four. She must, therefore, turn till she gets all her guns bearing on him. He can then turn parallel to her course and keep his distance. Also she is in a bad position from considerations of torpedo attack.

The same principle applies when two fleets meet. This is then called crossing the T.

If fleet A sights fleet B (Diagram 22), within a bearing of 30 degrees from right-ahead B will at once open fire with all its ships and all their guns on the two leading ships of fleet A. A can only reply with the four right-ahead guns of its leading ships, and the range for the other ships gets longer and longer the nearer they are to the tail of the line. So A must at once alter course to W Z (Diagram 23) to get all the guns of each ship to bear as

they turn at the point D. But the unequal action will continue until all A's ships have passed D.

If B does not want to let A close him, he alters course

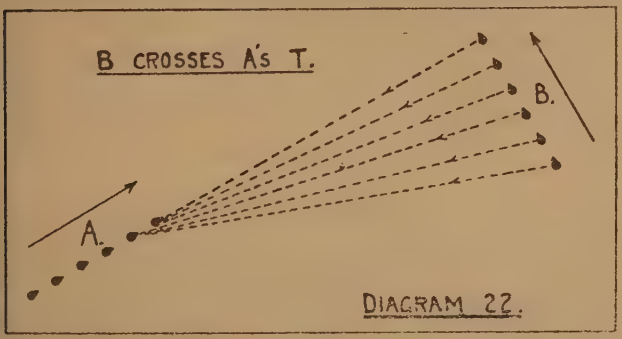


DIAGRAM 22.

to a direction V T, parallel to W Z, and still slates A with all the guns of all the ships.

The fact that sighting a fleet ahead does not mean that you can necessarily close it, is a point generally overlooked by the casual critic.

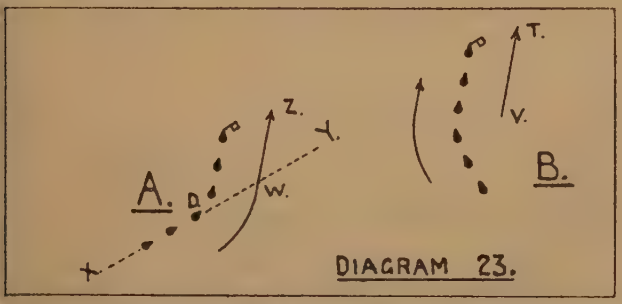


DIAGRAM 23.

This will be referred to later, so let us get it well into our minds.

There is one term that requires a little explanation, and that is *chasing* a fleet or a ship.

To "chase" does not necessarily mean to run behind, such as a ship A (Diagram 24) running after a ship B. Of course, in such a case A is chasing B, but the two ships can only bring their right-ahead and right-astern fire respectively to bear on each other.

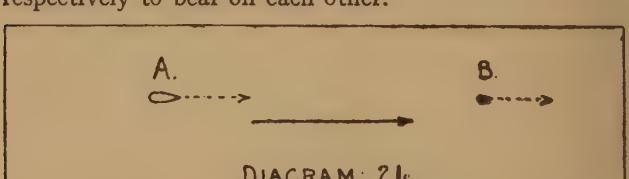


DIAGRAM 24

Chase far more often assumes the condition (Diagram 25) where A and B can both bring all their guns to bear on each other. A is still chasing B in that she is behind her, and as soon as B is disabled can gobble her up, but the ships are not *directly* behind each other.

There is one manœuvre that I have kept till the end. It was not used at Jutland, but in all probability it would have been had our battle cruisers on joining the battlefleet been able to give Admiral Jellicoe exact

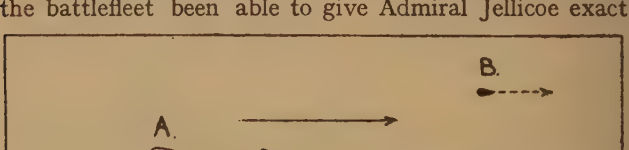


DIAGRAM 25

information regarding the whereabouts of the German battlefleet.

If a fleet is cruising in the tooth-of-a-comb formation and the enemy is reported some miles off, steering as shown by the arrow, the fleet can be wheeled as shown into position II. It can then go on steaming in this direction, and when the enemy is sighted a simple turn on the part of each leader together, and then the three

ships behind them following round, brings the whole fleet into line across the enemy's path.

This is called *Direct Deployment.*

The time taken depends of course on the angle of

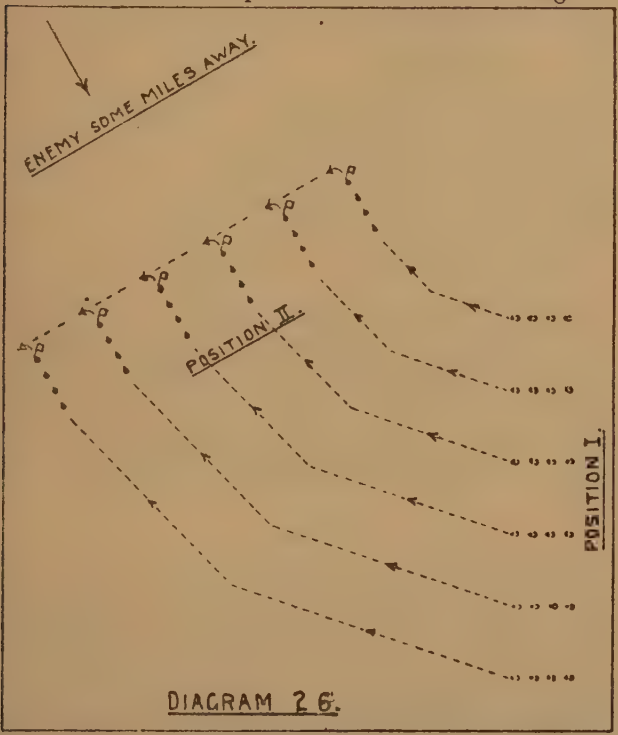


DIAGRAM 26.

the wheel; but as this is done before the enemy is sighted the time taken is not of importance.

The time taken to form single line from position II. is only three minutes, instead of the eighteen minutes required for the deployment on the right or left hand tooth—a matter of great advantage.

PART II

CHAPTER V

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

Phase I.: The cruiser action—Phase II.: The loss of the *Defence* and *Invincible*—Phase III.: The battlefleet action—The deployment—Had the deployment been on the Western Division—How the German fleet was cut off from the Horn Reef—The first smack—The second smack—The night—Escape of the German fleet.

WE will now give a brief outline of the Battle of Jutland, and then deal with each phase in greater detail.

PHASE I.

1.—The Battle Cruiser Fleet, composed of six of our Battle Cruisers, together with the 5th Battle Squadron, which consisted of four of our fastest battleships, as well as 14 Light Cruisers and 27 Destroyers, all under Admiral Beatty, met five of the German Battle Cruisers, five Light Cruisers and 22 Destroyers. Our six cruisers engaged the German five cruisers for three quarters of an hour and inflicted no serious damage on them, but two of our cruisers were sunk by German gun fire. The 5th Battle Squadron was in action for a quarter of an hour only.

2.—Our Cruisers sighted the German High Sea

Battlefleet and immediately turned and steamed back to the Grand Fleet, engaging the German battle cruisers at intervals on the way. The 5th Battle Squadron engaged the leading ships of the German High Sea Fleet as well as, at intervals, the German armoured cruisers.

3.—Our Battle Cruisers on the run north lost touch with the German High Sea Battlefleet, so that when Admiral Beatty in the *Lion* sighted the *Iron Duke* (Admiral Jellicoe's flagship) he was unable to report the position of the High Sea Fleet, which information was absolutely vital to the Commander-in-Chief to enable him to determine on which tooth of the comb to deploy, or whether to wheel the fleet ready for a direct deployment.

Phase II.

The cruisers ahead of the Grand Fleet while engaging some of the German light cruisers came under the fire of the leading ships of the German battle cruisers and Battlefleet as they emerged from the mist, and the *Invincible* and *Defence* were sunk.

Phase III.

The reckoning of the Grand Fleet was in error four miles to the east, that of the *Lion* seven miles to the west. Admiral Jellicoe therefore put the position of the *Lion*, and consequently the approximate position of the German fleet, eleven miles different from what it really was. This error could only be corrected by the reception of exact information from the *Lion* as to the position of the German Battlefleet on that ship's sighting the *Iron Duke*.

Admiral Jellicoe in vague doubt as to the exact position of his enemy deployed on his left-hand tooth.

The advantages of deploying on this tooth and not on the right-hand tooth were:

1.—He estimated the German fleet to be somewhat as shown in Diagram 27.

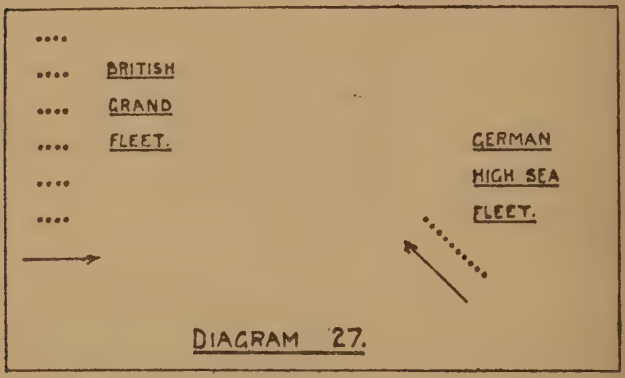


DIAGRAM 27.

If he deployed on his right-hand tooth he expected the German fleet would have crossed his T.

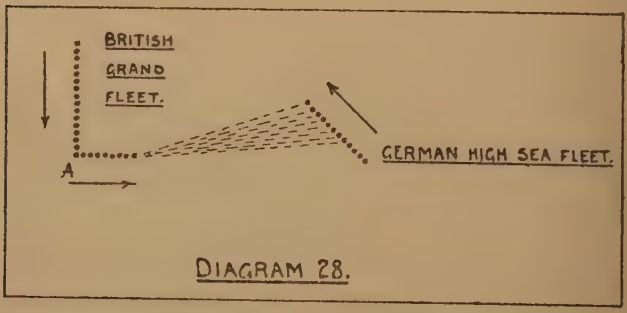


DIAGRAM 28.

This was quite enough to determine his deployment

on the left hand, for then (Diagram 29) he crossed the German fleet's T.

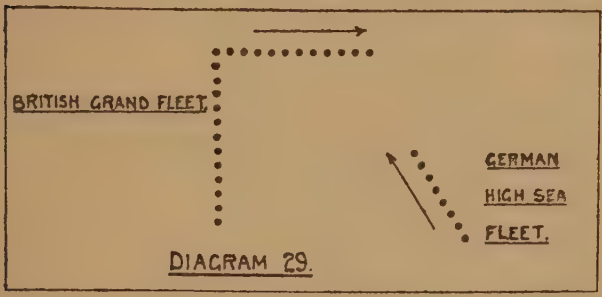


DIAGRAM 29.

This is what actually happened, and our Battleships gave the leading German Battleships a very warm time.

2.—Another reason for deploying on the left-hand tooth was to interpose our fleet between the German High Sea Fleet and their harbour.

This broadly shown (Diagram 30).

Owing to Admiral Jellicoe's masterly deployment the leading ships of the German High Sea Battlefleet sighted our battlefleet right-ahead, and those ships, as we have said, received a good hammering.

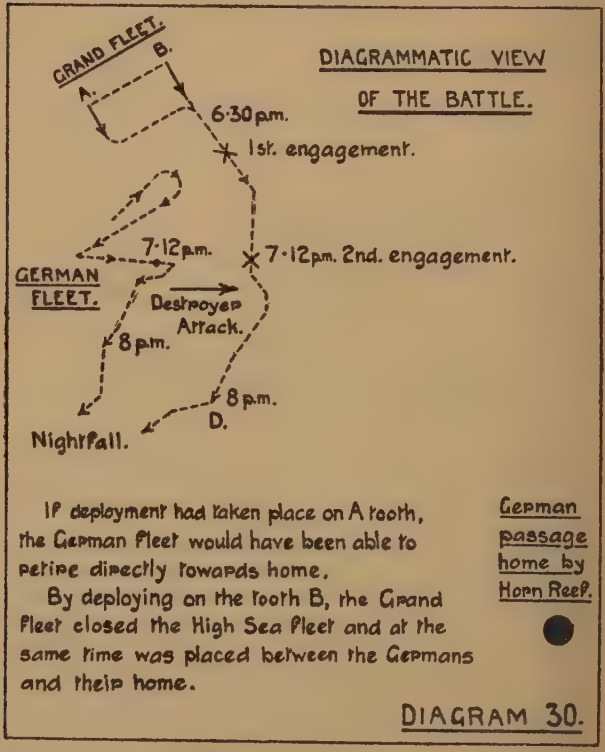
Admiral Scheer therefore turned and ran, using what he called "a short turn" movement, which in plain English was that every ship in his fleet turned and ran away from ours as fast as their engines would carry them.

Almost immediately they were lost in the mist and the extent of the turn could not be seen by Admiral Jellicoe.

Admiral Jellicoe had now to think quickly.

There were two possibilities. Either (a) the enemy's ships had run out of sight under cover of the mist to turn into a line parallel with that of our fleet; or (b) they had run away.

If (a), then the Grand Fleet would come across them again if he closed the enemy gradually by altering course towards the place where they had last been seen; this would also bring him between them and their harbour.


GRAND FLEET.
B.
A.
DIAGRAMMATIC VIEW
OF THE BATTLE.
6·30 p.m.
1st. engagement.
7·12 p.m.
7·12 p.m. 2nd. engagement.
GERMAN
FLEET.
Destroyer
Attack.
8 p.m.
8 p.m.
D.
Nightfall.
If deployment had taken place on A tooth, the German Fleet would have been able to retire directly towards home.
By deploying on the tooth B, the Grand Fleet closed the High Sea Fleet and at the same time was placed between the Germans and their home.
German passage home by Horn Reef.
DIAGRAM 30.

If (b), he could never catch them up because his speed was insufficient, and he had only two and a half hours before nightfall.

If he had chased he would have left the road to their harbour open for them; and therefore such an action would have been grossly idiotic as well as also extremely hazardous. But by closing and feeling for them he managed to get the Grand Fleet in between them and their port. Page 31

So he closed by successive alterations in course towards the enemy.

When Admiral Scheer pulled himself together he found that instead of running *towards* his harbour he was running to the westward right *away* from it; so he got his fleet into line again and steered to pass astern of our fleet to make for his passage home at the Horn Reef. But, to his intense disgust, for the second time he ran into our battlefleet, finding them again right ahead of him and this time between him and his harbour. Again he got a hammering.

So bad was this pounding that he made a flamboyant signal to his battle cruisers and destroyers to charge the Grand Fleet and save the High Sea Fleet; which they did most gallantly, and of course, in so doing, got badly mauled, while he, with the battlefleet, for the second time ran for his life away from his harbour.

Darkness now fell on the two fleets, with Admiral Jellicoe between Admiral Scheer and his harbour.

There were three principal passages through the German minefield: one on a bearing of about S.S.E. and 85 miles distant, another bearing about South and 160 miles distant. The third lay between the other two. Which was he going to make for? The only way to cover all three was to keep the fleet steaming south and extend the length of the battlefleet by spreading the destroyer divisions out behind to attack the enemy if he tried to force his way through.

It was the duty of all ships to give warning to the Commander-in-Chief if any of the enemy's large ships were sighted. Everything depended upon the look-out kept by the Grand Fleet lengthened for look-out purposes.

Here Admiral Jellicoe was badly served.

Two battleships, the *Malaya* and *Valiant*, one light cruiser, the *Champion*, and five destroyers all sighted the enemy's large ships.

All except *Faulkenor* failed to report that the enemy's battlefleet were passing through the destroyers in the rear of our fleet; and the *Faulkenor's* signal, probably jammed by the Germans, never got through. Hence the High Sea Fleet passed behind the Grand Fleet and entered their swept passage through the minefields in the early morning.

Had Admiral Jellicoe received a report from any of the vessels that the large German ships were breaking through astern, the battlefleet could have again been placed in front of the Germans, and would have engaged them at daylight.

Such was Jutland. It proved what everyone already knew, that you cannot make an enemy fight if he does not want to fight, unless you have greater speed and sufficient daylight in which to overtake him; or unless you can get between him and his harbour and keep there till he does fight. Admiral Jellicoe had neither speed nor sufficient daylight to force a decisive action; so he adopted the latter course; and had it not been for the failure of ships to report sighting the large ships of the enemy, *which it was their very first duty instantly to do*, the Germans would have been headed off their harbour and brought to action at daylight.

CHAPTER VI

PHASE I. : THE BATTLE CRUISER ACTION

The German plan—Admiralty information—The fleet put to sea—The battle cruisers sight the German cruisers—The dispersion of our cruiser fleet—The effect of not closing up the fighting units—Action commenced—Loss of *Indefatigable*—5th Battle Squadron come into action—Loss of *Queen Mary*—Gallant Destroyer attack—The German battlefleet sighted—The run North.

THE German plan of operations that led directly up to the Battle of Jutland was a simple one. Admiral Scheer's idea was to bombard Sunderland with his battle cruisers. This port was close to Rosyth, where our battle cruisers were lying. Twenty-two submarines were to be stationed off our coasts to attack the various portions of our fleet as they put to sea. If any of the battle cruisers got through, Admiral Hipper, with the German battle cruisers, was to lead them down to be crushed by the German battlefleet. The whole operation was to be helped by airship scouting. The weather prevented these vessels scouting efficiently, otherwise ample warning that our battlefleet had put to sea would have been conveyed to Admiral Scheer and Jutland would never have been fought.

Our Admiralty soon discovered that there was something special afoot and warned Admiral Jellicoe that the III. 323
German fleet might go to sea.

On May 30 an operation signal, undecipherable at Whitehall, was made to the German fleet. Orders were therefore sent to Admiral Jellicoe and Admiral Beatty to concentrate as usual at a rendezvous in the North

Sea. Whether the German operation would be aimed at the East coast of England or the English Channel no one knew.

The whole of the Grand Fleet was at sea by 10.30 p.m. on May 30.

Admiral Beatty left Rosyth, having with him a force consisting of 6 battle cruisers, 4 fast battleships, 14 light cruisers and 27 destroyers. The four battleships had been specially placed under his command by the Commander-in-Chief with a view to his having overpowering strength on meeting the German battle cruisers and crushing them once and for all.

Shortly after two o'clock in the afternoon of May 31, a chance steamer brought the two cruiser fleets into contact. The German cruiser admiral detached a destroyer to look at the steamer, and at the same time Captain Alexander Sinclair in the *Galatea* took a look at her also. The destroyer sighted the *Galatea's* smoke. The German light cruisers altered course to investigate, and the *Galatea* sighted and reported them. Every one rushed to support the other, and at 3.20 the two battle cruiser fleets sighted each other.

Let us follow very carefully the movements of the battle cruiser fleet.

Admiral Beatty had been cruising with the 5th Battle Squadron five miles distant from the battle cruisers. There was no justifiable reason for these two units being so far apart on a N.N.W. bearing. Any admiral of experience would have chosen a cruising formation which would have allowed line of battle to be formed in the shortest possible time, or would have stationed the slower ships nearest to the German base. This dispersion was a tactical error.

J.P. 443 1420 Appendix A

At 2.20 *Galatea* reported: "Urgent. Two cruisers probably hostile in sight bearing E.S.E." Clearly the first thing for the Admiral to do was to close up his capital ships. This he did not do. In twelve minutes he could have repaired the original error of dispersion; moreover, this time was available, as it was not till

2.32 p.m. that he signalled to the whole fleet to alter course, to S.S.E.

Then, without making certain that the 5th Battle Squadron had received the signal to alter course (flag signals at a distance are not always easy to make out), he, full of ardour, raced away at high speed. His signal staff never repeated so important a signal by searchlight. Owing to delay in receiving the alter-course signal, the distance of the 5th Battle Squadron from the battle cruisers was increased to *ten miles*.

J.P. 444
1430

III. 331

A.N. 107

This was the action of an impulsive fighter but not that of an experienced admiral.

Now what was the result?

Admiral Hipper, commanding the German cruisers, came on until he sighted our cruisers, and, owing to this helter-skelter way of bringing our battle cruiser fleet into action, instead of our battleships being in the line of battle when the action began they were several miles away. Had our Battle Cruiser fleet been closed up, the ensuing action, instead of being practically a defeat for our ships, might well have been a brilliant success. Annihilation should always be the result aimed at. Annihilation can only be achieved by numbers.

The Admiralty Narrative excuses Admiral Beatty and places the blame for not closing up on Admiral Evan Thomas, by saying that "an Admiral commanding a squadron sighting, or in touch with, the enemy would anticipate that his supporting squadron would close without further orders." No such an assumption can absolve the Senior officer from not having ordered the squadron to close. Nor is the statement fair to Admiral Evan Thomas.

III. 331

A.N. 107, *footnote* 3

At 1.30 p.m. Admiral Beatty had definitely stationed the 5th Battle Squadron N.N.W. 5 miles from his flagship, and the senior officer of the squadron had no right to depart from that station without orders. The 5th Battle Squadron had, by the stationing signal, become a definite part of the Cruiser fleet and was no longer an independent squadron. No general instructions as to

the conduct of the 5th Battle Squadron when in action with the battle cruisers seem to have been issued by Admiral Beatty before sailing. It was the business of the Admiral in command to concentrate his fleet and to help the concentration as much as possible himself. In this he failed when an experienced Admiral would have succeeded, and his battle cruisers paid dearly for the omission, and the nation missed what should have been an annihilating victory.

Meanwhile Admiral Jellicoe was steering to his rendezvous, and having been definitely informed by the Admiralty that the German Battlefleet were not at sea, he was saving the fuel of his destroyers and steaming only at 15 knots.

The reason for the Admiralty's mistake was a simple one. The German Battlefleet flagship had exchanged its wireless call-up sign with a shore station, so that as
III. 328 the call sign remained in harbour, apparently the flag ship was still there also, although in reality she had put to sea.

Immediately on receiving a wireless report that the German battle cruisers had been sighted, Admiral Jellicoe stopped zigzagging, worked up to full speed, and sent the three battle cruisers attached to his fleet to reinforce Admiral Beatty.

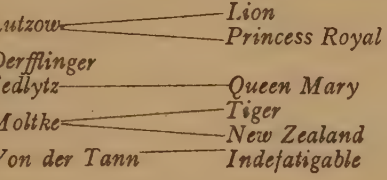
About 3.20 the two battle cruiser fleets sighted each other, and as soon as the German Admiral became aware of the presence of the 5th Battle Squadron he fell back towards his battlefleet, drawing, of course, our ships with him.

At 3.45 the German and English battle cruiser squadrons opened fire at about 16,000 yards; the 5th Battle Squadron was not able to open fire *for thirty minutes*
III. 336 *later*. The visibility of the enemy from our ships was not good. The enemy here had an advantage.

As there were only five German cruisers to our six, the *Lion* ordered, by signal, both our two leading ships to fire on the ship leading the German line, and for each of the other ships to fire at her opposite number, counting

from the *rear* of the German line. The third and fourth ships in our line missed the signal and therefore counted from the *bow*, hence the second ship in the German line was left unfired at. A very fatal blunder reflecting gravely on the signal organization of the Battle Cruisers. III. 334

The distribution of fire, owing to this error, was as under.



The fire was rapid, but on our side not good; the visibility was against us, and a destroyer division helped to obscure the enemy with its smoke; but, even so, our gunnery was poor. Our ships were hit several times, but we inflicted little damage on the enemy. Shortly after four o'clock the *Indefatigable* received a shell in her magazine, blew up and disappeared in a pall of smoke. Page 34

It was not till 4.5 p.m. that Admiral Evan Thomas and the 5th Battle Squadron sighted the German battle cruisers. Our battle cruisers had then for a short time withdrawn out of range of the German battle cruisers, and the absence of their smoke revealed the German ships to our battleships. III. 336

At 4.15 *Barham*, the flagship of the 5th Battle Squadron, opened fire at about 18,000 yards range. Her firing was reported by the Germans to have been magnificent, and this in spite of the fact that owing to the great range, and the smoke when the Germans again opened fire, the 5th Battle Squadron officers could see little to aim at through the haze and smoke. III. 337

What a tragedy that they, a good shooting squadron, had not commenced the action at the same time as the battle cruisers!

At 4.26, while the *Queen Mary* was being engaged by

the *Sedlytz* and *Derfflinger*, a salvo struck her upper deck, penetrated below, and, with one loud explosion, she immediately sank. Her magazine had been fired by the plunging salvo.

The German destroyers now advanced to deliver an attack. The leader of the German flotilla saw the plight his battle cruisers were in as soon as the 5th Battle Squadron had joined in the engagement and had found their range. He therefore determined to attack the 5th Battle Squadron in order to relieve his friends from the scourging they were undergoing. Shortly before this move on the part of the German destroyers, Commander Hon. E. Bingham in the *Nestor*, leading our 13th destroyer flotilla, had also seen an opportunity to bring off an attack and had commenced to race across the water separating the two fleets. As soon as he saw the German destroyers advancing, he turned straight towards them and broke up their attack, forcing them to fire their torpedoes at so long a range that none reached our 5th Battle Squadron. At the conclusion of the mêlée the only destroyer left with the *Nestor* was the *Nictator*, Lieutenant-Commander Beattie. Yet on went these two solitary vessels to carry out their attack, and arrived undamaged within 5,000 yards of the *Lutzow*, where they let fly two torpedoes.

Scheer High Sea Fleet 144

III. 338

The German battle cruisers turned away and foiled the attack, but on went Commander Bingham again until he got within 3,500 yards. Again the enemy dodged, and *Nestor* and *Nictator* came back in a veritable hail of shell. The Official History gives an inimitable description of the end of this fight.

III. 339

> "By this time Lieutenant-Commander Thompson, in the *Petard*, having become separated from his division, was endeavouring to attack with the *Turbulent*, followed by the *Nerissa* and *Termagant*, as well as the *Morris* and *Moorsom* of the 9th flotilla, who had attached themselves to the party. In the first onset he had fired a torpedo at the leading German destroyer, *V 27*, which seems to have taken deadly effect,

for she was soon seen to be lying stopped with her decks awash, but all the boats were too much engaged in the mêlée with the enemy's destroyers to be able to get at the squadron. It was a wild scene of groups of long low forms vomiting heavy trails of smoke, and dashing hither and thither at thirty knots or more through the smother and splashes and all in a rain of shell from the secondary armament of the German battle cruisers as well as from the *Regensburg* and the destroyers, with the heavy shell of the contending squadrons screaming overhead. Gradually a pall of gun and funnel smoke almost hid the shell-tormented sea, and beyond the fact that the German torpedo attack was crushed little could be told of what was happening, when at 4.43 the *Lion* ran up the destroyers' recall. As they all turned to obey it was seen that midway between the lines the *Nestor's* first antagonist, *V* 27, and another destroyer, *V* 29, were sinking. Near to them was the *Nomad* in a like condition, and as the *Petard* ran back she came across the *Nestor* hardly able to crawl. Commander Bingham, in dodging back from his second gallant attack, had had two boilers put out of action by the *Regensburg*. The *Petard* offered him a tow, but he refused to expose another destroyer to what looked like certain destruction."

At 4.33 the *Southampton* light cruiser, Commodore Goodenough, sighted the German battlefleet. At 4.40 Admiral Beatty promptly and quite properly altered course right round and made for the Grand Fleet. Again the signal to alter course never reached the 5th Battle Squadron, which carried on until eight minutes later, when they actually passed the Battle Cruisers, who were well on their return journey ; they then turned also, but owing to the delay they were, after turning, only about 20,000 yards from the leading ships of the German battlefleet. III. 340

The *Nomad* and *Nictator* had perforce to be left to their fate. Their crews were taken off by the Germans and the boats sunk.

A desultory action was carried on between the British and German battle cruisers on the run North. By 5 o'clock Admiral Beatty had lost sight of the German battlefleet.

The following table gives the distances the *Lion* was from the German battlefleet on the run back to the Grand Fleet.

III Plans 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

Time.	Distance from German Battlefleet. Yards.	Remarks.
4.40	24,000	The German Battlefleet was in sight.
5.0	22,000	Lost sight of German Battlefleet through gathering mist. Battle cruisers had turned to N.W.
5.20	24,000	German Battlefleet out of sight.
5.40	21,000	German Battlefleet out of sight.
5.56	19,000	Joined Grand Fleet. German Battlefleet out of sight.
6.14	14,000	Sighted German Battlefleet again.

At 5 p.m. the German battle cruisers were dimly visible when 17,000 yards away. The German battlefleet at 22,000 yards must have been well out of sight.

The 5th Battle Squadron came North, fighting the leading ships of the German battlefleet, and also at times the German battle cruisers, until at 5.30 the fight was gradually broken off, to be renewed again on joining up with the Grand Fleet battleships at 6.10.

A torpedo attack was made by the *Onslow* and the *Moresby* destroyers, and torpedoes were fired, but the attack was unsuccessful though gallantly attempted.

Thus ended Phase I. of Jutland, when a British force

was worsted by a squadron of one half its strength, our losses being two battle cruisers and the *Lion* badly damaged, while the enemy suffered little. And why? Because our Admiral in command was inexperienced and showed no tactical ability. Apparently he forgot the existence of the four battleships that had been specially put under his command and also the light cruisers that were attached to his fleet. At all events he failed to co-ordinate their movements to those of the battle cruisers.

Except for a signal to the battleships at 3.35 p.m. to alter course to East (three minutes after the same signal had been made to the battle cruisers), not a single signal was made specially to the battleships until after the turn North had been carried out by the battle cruisers; nor was a single signal made specially to the light cruisers between 3 p.m. and 5.47 p.m.; their existence was practically ignored. J.P. 449 1538 J.P. 415 J.P. 456

What a chance existed in the action for a cool level-headed tactician, both on the run South and on the run North! But the run South was merely a helter-skelter mêlée, when only half the force available was engaged for the majority of the time. During the run North the battleships were left to fight the High Sea battleships without the combined aid of the battle cruisers or even that of the light cruisers; the latter were never ordered to attack with torpedoes until 5.47 p.m., one hour and a quarter after the run North had commenced.

Then again on the run North not one signal was made conveying information to the Commander-in-Chief; and, lastly, Admiral Beatty completely lost touch with the High Sea Battlefleet, so that he joined the Grand Fleet battlefleet, dumb and unable to supply the Commander-in-Chief with the information which was vital to him to determine the method of his deployment; and this in spite of his having no less than *fourteen** light cruisers under his orders, one only of which, if properly stationed, would have kept him supplied with the necessary information.

* Thirteen and the *Engadine*.

CHAPTER VII

PHASE II

Commodore Goodenough—Activities of the *Invincible*—The *Chester* in action—*Invincible* damages German ships—Torpedo attack—Action of our destroyers—Gallant action of the *Shark*—Gallantry of Commander Loftus Jones—Lieutenant-Commander Tovey of the *Onslow*—The loss of the *Defence*—Narrow escape of the *Warspite*—Loss of the *Invincible*—False impression of the situation conveyed to the German Admiral.

THERE were many units, consisting of vessels of various classes, attached to our battlefleet as semi-independent commands. All these were steaming, many were attacking, repelling attacks, or scouting at the same time as the battlefleets were grimly approaching each other. It is impossible to give an account of all their various activities and at the same time to weave a consecutive story. Much, therefore, that is worthy of comment and record has been omitted in the interest of clearness of narrative. For a detailed account of this subsidiary work the Official History of the War should be consulted. One name, however, among the Senior Officers of the light cruiser squadrons stands out pre-eminently, namely, Commodore Goodenough, of the *Southampton*, Senior Officer of the Second Light Cruiser Squadron. He was always to the fore in scouting and in conveying accurate and reliable information, a model that may well be studied by Scouting Admirals in the future.

The part of the action we have styled Phase II. took place ahead of the battlefleet between the time that the

battle cruisers arrived in sight of the *Iron Duke* and the complete deployment of the Fleet. As these engagements were subsidiary to the main Battlefleet operations they have been treated as a separate phase of the main action.

About 5.40, half an hour before the deployment of the battlefleet, conflict was brewing out to the eastward of the Fleet.

The *Invincible*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral the Hon. Horace Hood, with two other ships of the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, had been sent by Admiral Jellicoe the moment he had heard of the enemy battle cruisers being sighted, to reinforce Admiral Beatty. At 5.27 when about twenty-five miles ahead of the battlefleet the *Chester*, one of Admiral Hood's light cruisers, sighted an enemy ship. Then out of the mist suddenly appeared the German Second Scouting Group, comprising the *Frankfort*, *Wiesbaden*, *Pillau* and *Elbing*. Within five minutes the *Chester*, under this concentrated fire, had three guns disabled and the majority of her guns' crews killed. With only one gun in action, she turned and made off at full speed, dodging the shell salvos like a snipe.

G.F. 329

III. 353

Admiral Hood was close at hand. Steering at once to the sound of the guns, his three ships suddenly burst through the mist on to the German light cruisers, who turned to escape; but they were too late, for before the mist hid them, the *Wiesbaden* was a wreck and the *Pillau* and *Frankfort* were badly damaged. To save his ships from the torpedoes launched from these vessels, Admiral Hood had to turn the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron sharply again to the East. Our destroyers, under Commander Loftus Jones, engaged the destroyers that had come to the assistance of the German vessels. A fierce fight ensued. The following is an account of the end of the *Shark* as described by Lord Jellicoe in his book, "The Grand Fleet."

"The attack of the British destroyers was carried out with great gallantry and determination, and,

G.F. 335

having frustrated the enemy's torpedo attack on the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, Commander Loftus Jones turned his division to regain his billet on our battle cruisers. At this moment three German vessels came into sight out of the mist and opened a heavy fire, further disabling the *Shark* and causing many casualties on board; Commander Loftus Jones was one of those wounded. Lieutenant-Commander J. O. Barron, commanding the *Acastor*, came to the assistance of the *Shark*, but Commander Loftus Jones refused to imperil a second destroyer and directed the *Acastor* to leave him. Commander Loftus Jones, who was assisting to keep the only undamaged gun in action, ordered the last torpedo to be placed in the tube and fired; but whilst this was being done the torpedo was hit by a shell and exploded causing many casualties. Those gallant officers and men in the *Shark* who still survived continued to fire the only gun left in action, the greatest heroism being exhibited. The Captain was now wounded again, his right leg being taken off by a shell; but he still continued to direct the fire, until the condition of the *Shark* and the approach of the German destroyers made it probable that the ship would fall into the hands of the enemy, when he gave orders for her to be sunk, countermanding this order shortly afterwards on realizing that her remaining gun could still be fought. A little later the ship was hit by two torpedoes and sank with her colours flying. Only six survivors were picked up next morning by a Danish steamer."

Another brilliant attack was carried out by the *Onslow*. Lieutenant-Commander Tovey, who had fired the torpedo which hit the *Wiesbaden*, found that, as a result of the action, the engines of the *Onslow* were only able to drive the vessel slowly. Suddenly, five miles off, he saw the German battleships steering towards him. In spite of his slow speed and the faint hope of surviving unless he at once retreated, he turned and attacked

them, firing his torpedoes at 8,000 yards. Then he slowly limped away, fortunately escaping what seemed almost certain destruction. He presently joined the *Defender*, a fellow cripple, and the two towed each other to Aberdeen, where they arrived forty-eight hours after.

Two tragedies were shortly to occur near the *Wiesbaden*.

Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Arbuthnot in the *Defence*, seeing the flashes of the guns of the *Chester* action, immediately steered towards them and shortly after sighted and opened fire on the *Wiesbaden*. The *Defence* at once drew on herself the fire of the leading German battle cruisers, and, within four minutes of engaging the *Wiesbaden*, was struck by two salvos. A shell exploded her after magazine and she immediately disappeared in the roar of a terrific explosion. The *Warrior*, her consort, nearly shared a similar fate.

The *Warspite*, the rear ship of the 5th Battle Squadron, whose steering gear had broken down, now came in for the attention of the German Battlefleet, and escaped, only after having had a particularly warm shelling from the leading ships. Diagram 31 shows the following feature of the general situation :

The battlefleet deploying across the enemy's T.

The First and Second Battle Cruiser Squadron taking station ahead of the line.

The Third Battle Cruiser Squadron leading ahead.

The place where the *Defence* sank.

The disabled *Wiesbaden* and damaged *Warspite*.

The second tragedy was now maturing.

It will be seen that the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, and the German battle cruisers and battlefleet, were steering on courses which quickly shortened the distance between them. Soon the *Invincible* came under the fire of four of the German battle cruisers and one of the leading battleships. Well as the *Invincible* was shooting —and she was shooting magnificently,—the conflict was too unequal. Several salvos struck her, and like her sisters, the *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*, she disappeared in a sheet of flame and a dense pall of smoke.

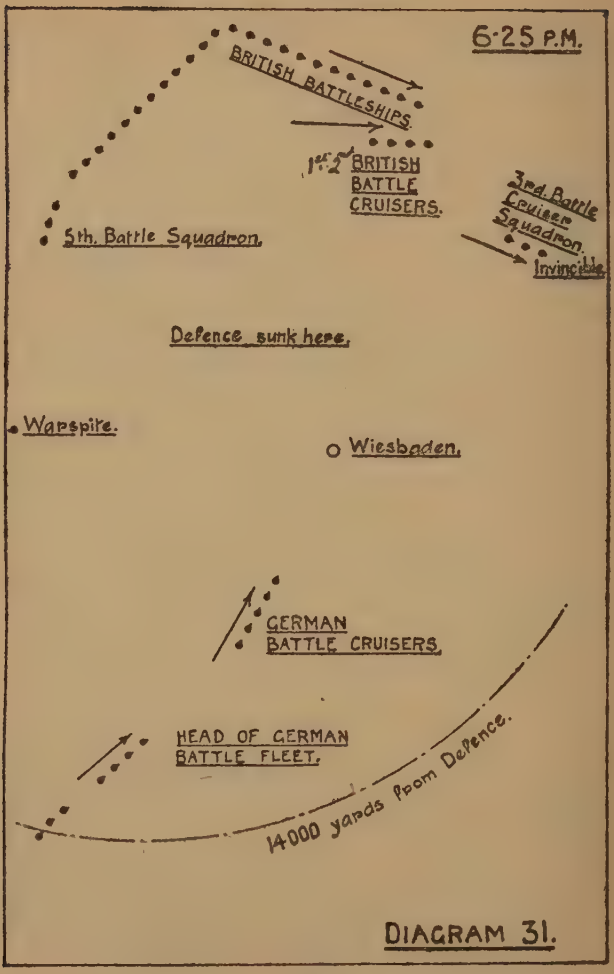

6·25 P.M.
BRITISH BATTLESHIPS.
1st & 2nd BRITISH BATTLE CRUISERS.
3rd. Battle Cruiser Squadron.
Invincible.
5th. Battle Squadron.
Defence sunk here.
Warspite.
Wiesbaden.
GERMAN BATTLE CRUISERS.
HEAD OF GERMAN BATTLE FLEET.
14000 yards from Defence.

DIAGRAM 31.

Phase II

After this the German battleships became conscious of the presence of our battlefleet, and had their attention fully occupied in returning the heavy fire that was being concentrated on them.

The action just narrated of the *Invincible* with the Second German Scouting Group gave Admiral Scheer, later on, the impression that the *Invincible* and her consorts were the leading ships of the British line of battle. Working back from this, he fixed the tail of our fleet as being five or six miles further ahead than it really was. Hence, as we shall see later, when he tried to dash astern of our fleet at seven o'clock, he struck the tail of our battle-fleet instead of being well astern of it. This led temporarily to a complete upset of the German Admiral's plans.

So ended Phase II., the first blast of the storm that was shortly to break on the two battlefleets.

CHAPTER VIII

PHASE III. : THE BATTLEFLEET ACTION

Deployment—Scouting—Errors in the position of the Battleship Fleet and Battle Cruiser Fleet—Failure of Admiral Beatty to keep touch with the German battlefleet—Admiral Jellicoe's consequent difficulty—The account given by the Official History—The arguments for the deployment—How the enemy's T was crossed—The enveloping movement—The argument against a general chase—The second smack—Sacrifice of the German battle cruisers—The Destroyer attack—Admiral Beatty's signal *re* cutting off the enemy—Its uselessness—The disposition for the night.

WE now come to what we may call Phase III. of the Battle of Jutland, when the two battlefleets came into action.

As we can well imagine, the time from 6 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. was one of expectation and suppressed excitement to the battlefleet. Everyone knew that at any moment the German High Sea Fleet might appear in sight and the long looked-for action be engaged in. To Admiral Jellicoe the time was one of tense expectancy. He would have to deploy, that is to change from his teeth-of-the-comb cruising formation to single line follow-my-leader as soon as he knew the exact direction of his enemy. How exactly the enemy did bear from him was the all-important question.

It was of great importance for Admiral Jellicoe :

1.—Not to deploy until he knew the position of the German battlefleet ; because after deployment it was highly desirable that his line should be steaming at right

angles to the direction in which the German fleet would be sighted. Had he deployed at random he might have had to alter the direction of his six-mile-long fleet, an operation requiring eighteen minutes to complete.

Page 43

2.—If time permitted to "wheel" his fleet so that the method of *direct deployment* could be used, occupying three minutes instead of eighteen minutes.

Page 49

3.—To have his deployment completed by the time the German fleet was sighted, so that all his ships could at once open fire.

Now let us say a word or two about scouting. If a ship is out of sight and you want to find out what her bearing and distance are from you, you must ask her where she is. She can only answer your question by giving you the latitude and longitude she thinks she is in. We must say "think," because at sea the exact position of a ship that has been for some time out of sight of land, or without observation of the sun or stars, is always a matter of doubt.

You also know the latitude and longitude you think your ship is in.

So you see there are two "thinks" involved; either one or both may be wrong. If either is wrong then any estimate you make of the bearing and distance the ship is from you will also be wrong. Hence to fix the exact bearing and distance that a ship is from you it is necessary to *sight* the ship.

Take now the case of a cruiser scouting. When the cruiser sights the enemy she can measure the bearing and distance he is from her. If at the same time you sight the cruiser, you can measure her distance from you. You can then from these two pieces of information with great accuracy find the distance and bearing that your ship is from the enemy, although the enemy may not actually be in sight from your ship. But until you actually sight your friend the cruiser you must remain in doubt of her exact bearing and distance from you and therefore the exact bearing and distance of your ship from the enemy she has sighted.

Now, as a matter of fact, at 6 p.m., owing to zigzagging, the estimated position of the Grand Fleet was four miles more to the east than it should have been ; and, owing to the battle cruisers having been engaged in an action and other causes, the position the battle cruisers estimated they were in was seven miles west of their true position, so that there was a difference of eleven miles between the estimated and the true position of the battleships relative to the battle cruisers. Admiral Jellicoe had every reason to count on the fact that when Admiral Beatty came in sight, he would give him the accurate bearing and distance of the German fleet from the *Lion*. Time would therefore still be available to Admiral Jellicoe to deploy on the proper course for fighting. But in this he was badly disappointed, for when the *Lion* hove in sight she had lost touch with the German fleet, and Admiral Beatty was unable to supply Admiral Jellicoe with the information that was vital to him to determine his deployment.

III. 355

At 6.1 Admiral Jellicoe signalled to the *Lion*: "Where is the enemy's battlefleet ?" The only reply was at 6.6, "Enemy's battle cruisers bearing S.E." This was a "thank you for nothing" reply. So that at the very moment when the exact position of the enemy's fleet should have been known to Admiral Jellicoe events conspired to create the greatest ambiguity as to its position.

III. 355

1.—First of all Admiral Beatty had lost touch with the enemy.

The main reason why the battle cruisers were originated was to push home a reconnaissance and report to the Commander-in-Chief; and, although Admiral Beatty had fourteen light cruisers as well as the 5th Battle Squadron to help him, he had failed to keep touch through any of these ships with the enemy and was therefore unable to report to his Commander-in-Chief.

Page 65, *footnote.*

2.—Then the eleven miles difference in reckoning had caused the *Lion* to be sighted by the *Iron Duke* in a totally different direction to that which previous reports of latitude and longitude had led him to expect.

Hardly crediting this scouting failure on the part of the battle cruisers, Admiral Jellicoe signalled again:

"Where is the enemy's fleet?" but Admiral Beatty had none of their fleet in sight and therefore made no reply. At 6.14, however, the German battlefleet steamed into sight and he signalled back: "Have sighted the enemy's battlefleet S.S.W." III. 356 III. 361

It has been suggested that the necessity of keeping the German battle cruisers away from our fleet was the reason why our cruisers lost touch with the German battlefleet. This cannot be the complete explanation. In the first place, our cruisers steered the course selected by them to rejoin our battlefleet and also steamed at the speed selected by them. The German cruisers were conforming to this course and speed, engaging our cruisers at intervals. They were in no sense searching for our battlefleet. They had no idea our battlefleet was at sea.

There would be reason in giving credit to the battle cruisers for rushing away to inform the Commander-in-Chief of the position of the German battlefleet; but it was useless to do so unless they knew where it was when they sighted the Commander-in-Chief. If Admiral Beatty, while still keeping the enemy's battle cruisers away from the Grand Fleet, had thrown out just one of his light cruisers as a link, in visual touch with the enemy, and if the *Lion* had kept up communication with her, all would have been well. As it was he apparently failed to appreciate the essentials of the moment, namely, that the battlefleet deployment was all-important and his cruiser scrap was a mere incident of no value compared to the coming clash of the two main fleets. A mind thoroughly prepared by experience would instinctively have seized on the essential points of the tactical position.

It is best to quote the exact words of the Official History of the War, which deals with the position in which Sir John Jellicoe found himself.

III.
361–362

"Many had been the critical situations which British admirals in the past had been called upon suddenly to solve, but never had there been one which demanded higher qualities of leadership, right judgment and quick decision than that which confronted Admiral Jellicoe in this supreme moment of a Naval War. There was not an instant to lose if the deployment were to be made in time. The enemy, instead of being met ahead, were on his starboard side. He could only guess their course. Beyond a few miles everything was shrouded in mist; the little that could be seen was no more than a blurred picture, and with every tick of the clock the situation was developing with a rapidity of which his predecessors had never dreamt. At a speed higher than anything in their experience the two hostile fleets were rushing upon each other; battle cruisers, cruisers and destroyers were hurrying to their battle stations, and the vessels steaming across his front were shutting out all beyond in an impenetrable pall of funnel smoke. Above all was the roar of battle both ahead and to starboard, and in this blind distraction Admiral Jellicoe had to make the decision on which the fortune of his country hung.

"His first and natural impulse was, he says, to deploy on the starboard flank, which was nearest to the enemy. But for this the decisive intelligence had come too late, and he was too near. Heavy shells were already falling between the lines of his divisions, and if he deployed as his natural impulse was, it would mean that Admiral Burney, whose squadron was the oldest and least powerful in the fleet, would receive the concentrated fire of the enemy's best ships, and almost certainly a heavy destroyer attack while in the act of deployment. To increase the disadvantage, he would be compelled as he deployed to turn to port in order to avoid having his T crossed; this would mean that the fleet would be turning at least twelve points in the thick of the enemy's fire, and

what is still more important, the action would be opened well within torpedo range of the enemy's battleships, a hazard which in Admiral Jellicoe's system it was vital to avoid. It is scarcely to be doubted that his reasoning was correct. We now know that such an opening with the visibility as low as it was, would have given his enemy exactly the opening he prayed for. The tactics on which Admiral Scheer's whole conception of offensive action with an inferior fleet was undoubtedly based were a rapid and overwhelming concentration with gun and torpedo on part of his opponent's line, followed by a withdrawal under cover of a smoke screen before a counter concentration could be brought to bear—a bold manœuvre which the High Sea Fleet had persistently practised."

Let us put the matter in the form of a simple diagram. Had the right tooth of the comb been the one selected for deployment, the position five minutes after the signal had been made would have been much as in Diagram 32.

The whole brunt of the action so far as the Grand Fleet was concerned would have fallen, to begin with, on four of our slowest and oldest ships, within torpedo range of the enemy, and all the other 22 ships would have been powerless to fire a shot and only able to come one by one into action as they followed for twenty minutes round at the point A. Admiral Jellicoe deployed, however, on the left-hand tooth. His brain had previously, time after time, ruminated over the possibilities that varying emergencies might suddenly spring upon him, and therefore he was ready and prepared to make a vital decision instantly and correctly.

Some have suggested that his deployment should have been made on the centre tooth. This would have brought our fleet no nearer the enemy. It would only have saved some eight or nine minutes before contact with the enemy was made. It had the great disadvantage

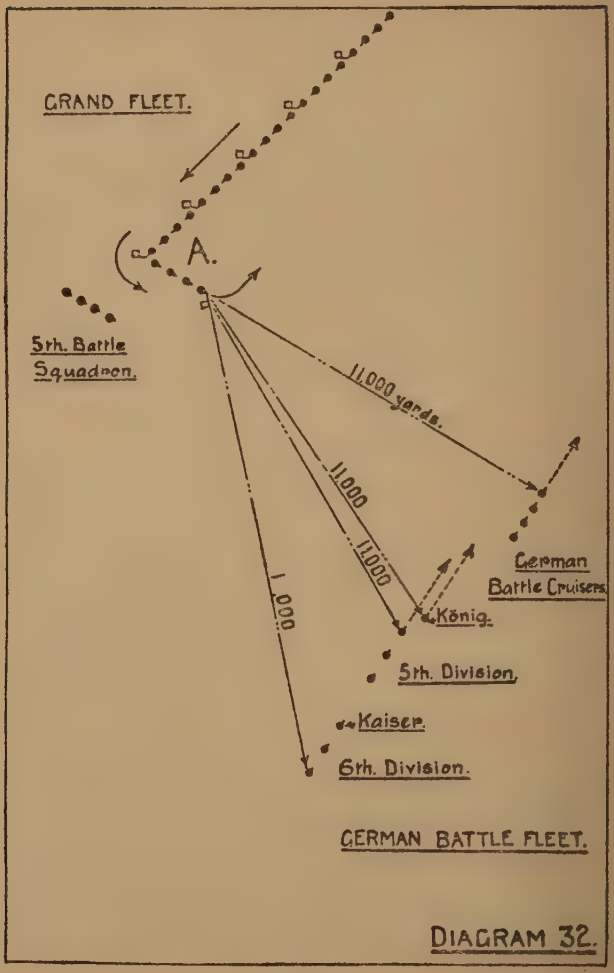

GRAND FLEET.
A.
5th. Battle Squadron.
11,000 yards.
11,000
11,000
1,000
German Battle Cruisers.
König.
5th. Division.
Kaiser.
6th. Division.
GERMAN BATTLE FLEET.

DIAGRAM 32.

that it was a manœuvre that could not be carried out by a simple follow-my-leader method, some of the ships would have had to reduce speed to dead slow, and the flagship would have been brought at one end or the other of the line. So no advantage would have been gained, but several disadvantages would have been incurred.

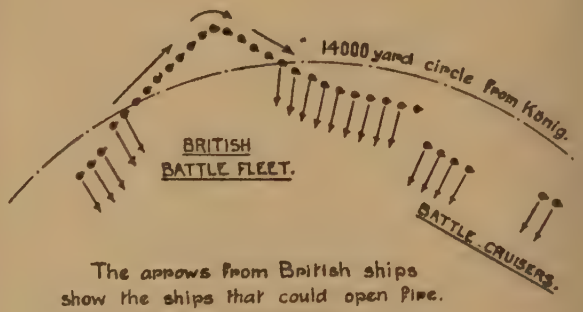
Now turn to Diagram 33, which shows what actually happened. The whole of the Grand Fleet ships that lay inside the circle shown and marked as the 14,000-yards circle (except some of the leading battleships whose fire was masked by the smoke of the battle cruisers) could, and did, open fire on the enemy. III. Frontispiece

Attempts have been made to blame Admiral Beatty for obscuring vision with the smoke of the battle cruisers. But it was in no way his fault. He had a definite position to take up, and he most rightly took it up in the shortest time possible. It was quite out of his power to prevent his smoke trailing behind him.

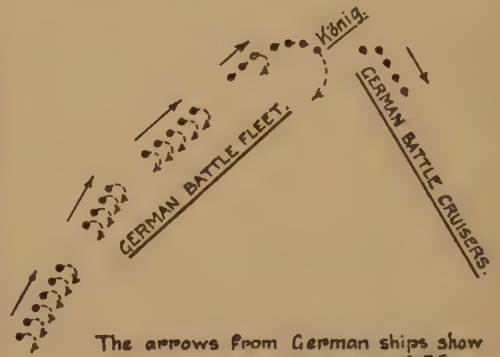
The result of our gun fire was that the German battleships turned and ran dead away from the Grand Fleet on a S.W. course, in spite of the fact that the Horn Reef passage lay about S.E. The German Fleet therefore, in their precipitate retreat to get at all hazards out of the devastating fire of our battlefleet, steered a course nearly at right angles to that which would take them back to the Jade.

The exact amount that they had turned "away" could not be estimated by Admiral Jellicoe or his Staff. The German battleships had disappeared. But in what direction had they gone? The chances were that they had merely run under cover of the mist to complete forming their line parallel to our fleet and that they would then come again into sight and continue the action.

Admiral Jellicoe therefore altered course with his fleet 45 degrees towards where the German fleet were hidden in the mist, so as to close them and also to get the Grand Fleet between them and the Horn Reef. III. 372



The arrows from British ships show the ships that could open Fire.



The arrows from German ships show how they turned precipitately at 6-35 p.m..

DIAGRAM 33.

If he had turned straight at, and chased the German Fleet, as some lunatics have suggested that he should have done, not only would he have seriously endangered the Grand Fleet, without any prospect of damaging the enemy, but he would actually have been further from the German fleet at dark than he eventually was! Page 31

Let us see why.

The German Dreadnoughts, except their two oldest classes, the *Heligoland* and the *Nassau* classes, were equal to, or greater, in speed than the average battleships of the Grand Fleet. Again, the Germans knew the date they proposed to come out to fight and could clean their ships' bottoms in anticipation. They therefore could have all their ships in a condition to steam at their highest speed, whereas our ships could only go singly in rotation to be docked, so that some of them were sure to have dirty bottoms and therefore could only steam at less than their best speed. G.F. 310–313 Brassey's Annual 1913

Taking this into account, the speed of the slowest German Dreadnoughts, those of the *Heligoland* and *Nassau* classes, was probably about as good as the oldest of our Dreadnoughts.

It is only when we consider the old German pre-Dreadnought ship that we find any marked superiority in favour of the Grand Fleet. Compared with these our Grand Fleet had the advantage of a knot and a half greater speed.

But let us look at the distance that the various units of the German fleet were from our ships when Admiral Scheer turned away.

Owing to our having crossed the German T, the German tail streamed away from our fleet at the distances shown in Diagram 34.

Between 6.30 and 9 p.m. two hours and a half of daylight only remained. Now if Admiral Jellicoe had chased these ships, which (although at the time he did not know it) had already turned round and were running as hard as they could away from our fleet, after a two hours and a half chase, when darkness

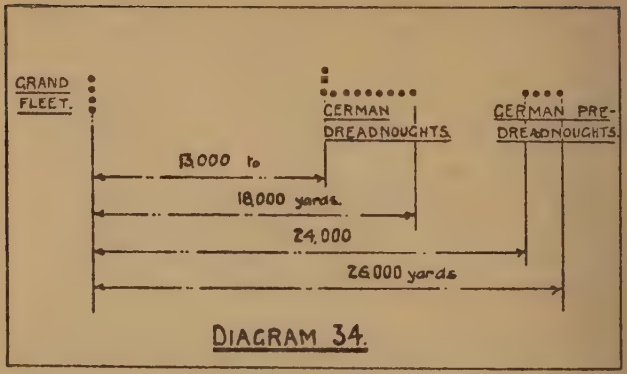


DIAGRAM 34.

had fallen on the fleet, the distances would have been as follows:

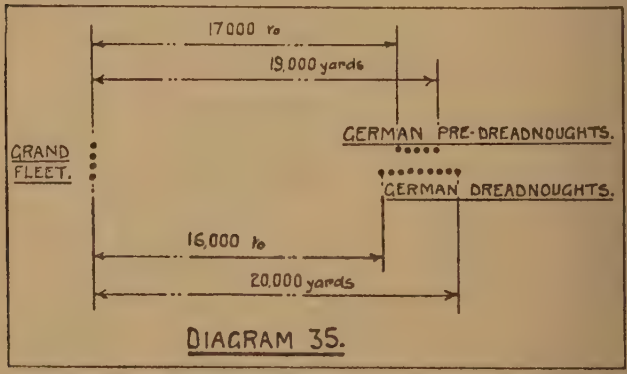


DIAGRAM 35.

The nearest German ship would still have been 16,000 yards away and out of sight.

So let this forever dispel the hallucination that had Admiral Jellicoe chased the German fleet he could have forced a close action. As a matter of fact, he would never again have sighted them. They would never have

been seen again; they would have steered straight back to their harbours laughing at his efforts to overtake them.

Now to hark back. We have seen that at 6.35 Admiral Scheer turned and ran. At five minutes to seven o'clock he pulled himself together and tried to break across the place where he imagined the rear of our Grand Fleet to be; but he was horribly sold to find that Admiral Jellicoe was again between him and his harbour, and that at 7.12 p.m. he ran into a heavy fire from our battlefleet. He found himself in the position shown in Diagram 36 and received smack number two.

His leading battleship was only 12,000 yards from our nearest ship, his leading cruiser was barely 10,000 yards from the *Colossus*, and before he could turn again and get out of range he was badly mauled.

In order, therefore, to extricate his fleet, Admiral Scheer made a signal to his battle cruisers to "charge the enemy, ram, ships are to attack without regard to consequences." K. and J. 125

It was a veritable "death ride" for the battle cruisers.

The battle cruisers by this attack succeeded in attracting the greater volume of fire on themselves. In a couple of minutes the *Derfflinger*, the leading ship, had two turrets blown to pieces, her decks were a shambles, and she was ablaze fore and aft, and all her fire control gear was out of action. She was blinded with the smoke from the fire of the *Lutzow*, one of her sister ships, which was burning close to her, and the other battle cruisers suffered severely in casualties and structural damage. III. 380

At 7.20 Admiral Scheer, having turned his battlefleet round, recalled his cruisers and destroyers.

The Official History records the end thus:

"Fitfully the firing died away; like a Homeric mist the smother of haze and smoke thickened impenetrably between the combatants, and Admiral Scheer, for the time at least, had saved his fleet; but no more. His III. 380

GRAND FLEET BATTLESHIPS.
British Battle Cruisers.
German Battle Cruisers.
GERMAN BATTLE FLEET.

DIAGRAM 36.

surprise tactics had not had the effect he expected; they had not upset his enemy's plans for the rest of the day, nor had his attack 'fallen heavily enough,' as he says he hoped, to facilitate his 'breaking loose at night.'"

Von Hase, the gunnery officer of the *Derfflinger*, describes the attack as follows:

"Battleship encounter.

"A fierce and unequal engagement now developed. Several heavy projectiles struck us with tremendous force and burst inside the ship with terrific noise."

He also describes the position the German Fleet had been caught in as: "In absoluten Wurstkessel," a liberal translation of which is "In the frying pan." He says "a perfect hail of projectiles beat on us, a fifteen inch burst in the turret called *Caesar*. The flames penetrated to the working chamber, where two other cartridges caught fire; flames leapt out of the turret as high as a house, but they did not explode, as the enemy's cartridge had done. The effect was appalling, 73 out of 78 men of the turret crew were killed outright.

"A fifteen-inch shell hit the roof of *Dora* turret; again charges were set fire to, roaring up into the sky from both after turrets like funeral pyres. The enemy had our range to an inch.

"The *Seydlitz* was heavily down by the bow. The *Lutzow* was hidden, burning in dense smoke. The *Moltke* and *Von der Tann* had been severely handled. Each of our battle cruisers had suffered a great number of casualties, hundreds had perished in the dauntless attack."

When Admiral Scheer made his "death ride" signal to his cruisers he also launched his destroyers to attack; these rushed forward with determination. The German battlefleet was lost to view behind the smoke and haze.

Page 28 The attack promised to be a formidable one, and Admiral Jellicoe instantly turned his fleet away, using what had been decided on as the only manœuvre that would satisfactorily frustrate such an attack.

He turned his ships first of all 22 degrees away; but the officer who was working the instrument for calculating the amount of turn that was necessary according to varying conditions of attack, informed him that 22 degrees was insufficient.

G.F. 361 Admiral Jellicoe therefore turned yet another 22 degrees, making 44 in all. Three distinct attacks were made by the German destroyers. Twenty-two torpedoes were fired, but thanks to Admiral Jellicoe's manœuvre all these were avoided by the ships; but it was close work. Had he not turned, we might have had to lament the loss of several battleships with no advantage gained. The

G.F. 363 total distance in range sacrificed by these turns was only 1,750 yards. Immediately the attacks had been frustrated Admiral Jellicoe turned the fleet again up towards the Germans.

We now come to an episode which has been entirely misunderstood by the general public and also totally misrepresented in passing from mouth to mouth.

III. 383 At 7.50 Admiral Beatty sent a message: "Submit van of battleships follow battle cruisers; we can then cut off whole of enemy's battlefleet." This was received in

Ibid., footnote *Iron Duke* and given to Admiral Jellicoe about 8.4.

At 8.7, or shortly after, Admiral Jerram received Admiral Jellicoe's order to follow Admiral Beatty.

As a matter of fact there was nothing from which the battle cruisers could cut the German battlefleet off! They had already been cut off from their harbours. Admiral Jellicoe had the main German battlefleet in sight, Admiral Beatty had seen only the leading ships of that fleet. But in order to close rapidly Admiral Jellicoe ordered Admiral Jerram, who was leading the line, to follow the battle cruisers.

Darkness was now rapidly coming on; so there is little more left to record.

Phase III

The battle cruisers carried out some fitful firing at the German old pre-Dreadnought battleships at long-range; only two projectiles hit the German ships.

Admiral Jellicoe formed his fleet for night cruising, breaking up into divisions to avoid the long line of battle so open to torpedo attack. He also prolonged his line astern by stationing his destroyer flotillas in that direction. In this position they were able better to discriminate between enemy and friendly battleships, and so "regrettable accidents" were minimized, and at the same time they provided a most thorny screen should the Germans attempt to pass behind the Grand Fleet.

The course of the Grand Fleet for the night was South. G.F. 374

It is impossible to leave Phase III. without remarking on the failure of the battle cruisers to feel for the enemy and to keep in touch with them throughout the action. Very different was the scouting of the Light Cruisers, an example that might well have been emulated. There was a great opportunity for the Battle Cruiser Admiral in the misty weather that prevailed to push out to the westward and to get and keep in touch with and report to the Commander-in-Chief the position and the movements of the enemy's battlefleet, so that the latter could, from such information, close the enemy with the centre of his line. The paramount value of such independent action on the part of high-speed battle cruisers does not seem to have occurred to Admiral Beatty. All the scouting work was left to the Light Cruisers. It was only after 7.30 p.m. that the battle cruisers arrived appreciably closer than the *Iron Duke* to the enemy's battlefleet.

CHAPTER IX

FIGHTING

PHASE IV: THE NIGHT ACTION

Destroyers' work at night—The pariah of the sea—Possible courses of the High Sea Fleet—Conflicting telegrams and reports—Failure of *Malaya* and *Valiant*—Good work of the *Faulkenor*—Sinks the *Pommern*—Escape of the High Sea Fleet—Destroyer actions during the night—Commodore Tyrwhitt—His start and recall—Admiralty reasons.

THERE is one class of fighting at sea which has no counterpart in land warfare, namely, a night action. Ashore in a night attack, one army is fixed in position and the exact locality for the attack is known; at sea, both forces are mobile. At the Battle of the Nile the French Fleet were at anchor and our ships anchored as they arrived opposite the French vessels: there was none of the doubt that accompanies two opposing fleets silently moving through the impenetrable darkness of the night.

The problem presented to Admiral Jellicoe at 9 p.m. on the 31st May was one of surpassing complexity. We will try and explain the various issues.

The Grand Fleet, while closing the German High Sea Fleet, had been skilfully manœuvred between that fleet and its harbours, but the advantage thus obtained vanished considerably as darkness came on. Darkness cramps and renders the finest ships largely powerless. It degrades the offensive strength of the various vessels

down to a common level. The battleship, proud in an armament of ten guns able to fire at ranges up to ten miles, finds her range limited to one thousand yards. The torpedo rises in value as near approach to a battleship is permitted by the shielding darkness, and the battleship supreme in daytime is at a disadvantage to the destroyer owing to the obscurity of the night.

At night all fleet actions must develop into single ship combats. Mutual support is an impossibility, gunnery skill is effaced. The whole combat becomes one of chance; but a certain advantage attaches to the fleet with the initiative. Let us see what this means.

Take the conditions prevailing on the night of Jutland. Our Grand Fleet was between Admiral Scheer and his harbour. He would have been quite justified in saying, "If I stay out till morning my fleet will be gobbled up in daylight by the Grand Fleet. My game is to charge right through the Grand Fleet in the dark; I may lose some ships, but I shall not lose all."

The fleet breaking through always has the initiative, and knows to the tick of a second when they will act and exactly what they are going to do.

Let us suppose in carrying out the attempt Admiral Scheer had struck the centre of our battlefleet. The scene of chaos that would have ensued beggars all imagination. With his fleet going about 18 knots he would have charged clean into the middle of our ships. His one and only preoccupation being to go straight on for his harbour. Not necessarily to fight. Collisions. Yes! but he would drive through and would expect an equal number of our ships as of his own to be sunk. Gun fire! After one minute the fog of the cordite smoke would have rendered searchlights useless—what a hellish cauldron those few acres of the North Sea would have been for some quarter of an hour. Friend indistinguishable from foe. The fleet a rabble of single ships. The restraint of doubt at times saving enemies from attack; mistaken identity sacrificing friends.

All the peace training thrown to the winds, luck and happy chance the sole arbiters of the conflict. What an action to have been in and lived through.

Admiral Jellicoe, on the other hand, could not take the initiative. He had no reason to charge through the German Fleet—quite the contrary. Had he tried to do so he would probably have missed them altogether. It was best for him to remain if possible between them and their harbours till daylight. There was no offensive action he could take with his large ships which would not be a ghastly gamble, even supposing he could have hit off their exact position in the dark. The initiative therefore lay with Admiral Scheer, not with Admiral Jellicoe.

And what about the destroyers?

First of all, a destroyer finds considerable difficulty in distinguishing friend from foe at night unless the ship is lighted up by a searchlight; and, *vice versa*, the difficulty of a battleship to recognize the nationality of a destroyer is equally great.

The fundamental principle adopted for night work is that it is better to sink a friendly destroyer than to risk the loss of a large ship through withholding gun fire.

A destroyer therefore cannot be certain, merely because she is being fired on, that the ship firing must needs be an enemy. It may well be a friend taking precautions against risks. Everyone's hand therefore is against the destroyer, and she must act warily, for she will get no thanks if she makes a mistake and sinks one of her own ships. Actual attacks using gun fire cannot be carried out in peace-time, so that destroyer education in night attack in peace-time lacks reality.

Now the Jutland night action did not culminate in a clash of battleships. Admiral Jellicoe, knowing that his battlefleet only interposed a short screen between the enemy and their coast, lengthened his line by spreading his destroyers and light cruisers astern, his screen by this means being increased to sixteen miles. His argument was that if the High Sea Fleet tried to break

through this screen and missed the battleships, they would be badly handled by destroyers, in which case the German Fleet might not care to try to force on through the screen, but would not improbably sheer off again to the eastward. In any case he would have their presence reported. This is what actually did happen.

Admiral Scheer, however, had quite rightly made up his mind to push through at all hazards. Moreover, Admiral Jellicoe's W/T signal stationing the destroyers astern of the fleet had been intercepted and decoded by the German shore station and repeated to Admiral Scheer, so that he knew when he struck our destroyers that he was astern of our battleships, and that if his light cruisers could break down the attack of these vessels the road to his harbour was clear. III. 395

We must bear in mind that there were three main passages through the mine fields by which the Germans could return to their base, one by the Horn Reef bearing approximately S.E., another further off bearing about South from the Grand Fleet, and a third leading to Heligoland between the two. Which one would the Germans use? There was no hint or clue to go on; at all events there was none before 11 p.m.

Admiral Jellicoe fully expected the fleet to be attacked by enemy destroyers, and therefore anticipated that occasional scraps would be carried on throughout the night in the rear part of the Fleet, and perhaps in the main fleet itself.

Events worked out as had been anticipated on board the *Iron Duke;* several bursts of firing were heard astern. About 11 p.m. Admiral Jellicoe asked Commander Hawkesley, of the light cruiser *Castor,* if he was engaging enemy's destroyers. Crossing his question came the message that he had engaged enemy cruisers. As the light cruisers were certain to support a destroyer attack the reply merely confirmed the inference that the expected attack had taken place. Commodore Goodenough reported that he had engaged the enemy's cruisers bearing W.S.W., and at 11.30 Captain Duff,

III. 403 of the *Birmingham*, reported the enemy's cruisers in sight, steering South. This was a course practically parallel to the course of the Grand Fleet.

At 11.5 a message deciphered and delivered to the Commander-in-Chief about 11.30 was received from
III. 402 the Admiralty, summarizing the intercepted German wireless messages that had been received at 9.5 and 9.16 stating that the German battlefleet had been ordered home, and that its course was S.S.E. ¾E., speed 16 knots, the battle cruisers being in rear.

Another Admiralty message received at 10.30 and read at 11.0., gave a latitude and longitude of the German fleet that was obviously incorrect.

The original message intercepted by the Admiralty had asked for an airship to reconnoitre in the early morning off the Horn Reef. This fact was not passed on, as unfortunately the Admiralty thought that the course of the German fleet as given in their message was a sufficient indication of the probable movements of that fleet. But to those at sea, who had reports as to the position and course of the enemy ships from the light cruisers at times subsequent to those mentioned in the German messages, the position was by no means clear. If the German Fleet had altered course at 9.16, how was it that the German Fleet was well to the westward of Commodore Goodenough at 10.15? Again, how was it that Captain Duff could report at 11.30 that he had seen their battle cruisers steering South, when, if they were making for the Horn Reef, they should have been steering S.E.

The explanation of the latter is now simple. Owing to an attack by the fourth flotilla the German van, which had been steering to the South-eastward, swung back to South-west, and had pulled up again to South just at the time Captain Duff sighted them. The course on which they had been observed was therefore a temporary and not a permanent one. No further reports after 11.30 came in to the Commander-in-Chief.

Phase IV

Now it seemed inconceivable to Admiral Jellicoe that the German Fleet could pass through the destroyers and light cruisers massed astern without being sighted. He therefore fully expected that that fleet would remain to the westward unless he received news of an attempt made by them to pass astern.

He was partly right. Right to the extent that the German battleships must be sighted, but wrong in assuming that such vital information was bound to be reported.

As a matter of fact, the ships of the main German fleet were sighted at 11.35 p.m. by the *Malaya* battleship, Captain the Hon. A. D. Boyle, and the *Valiant* battleship, Captain N. Woollcombe. III. 401-402 Append.C

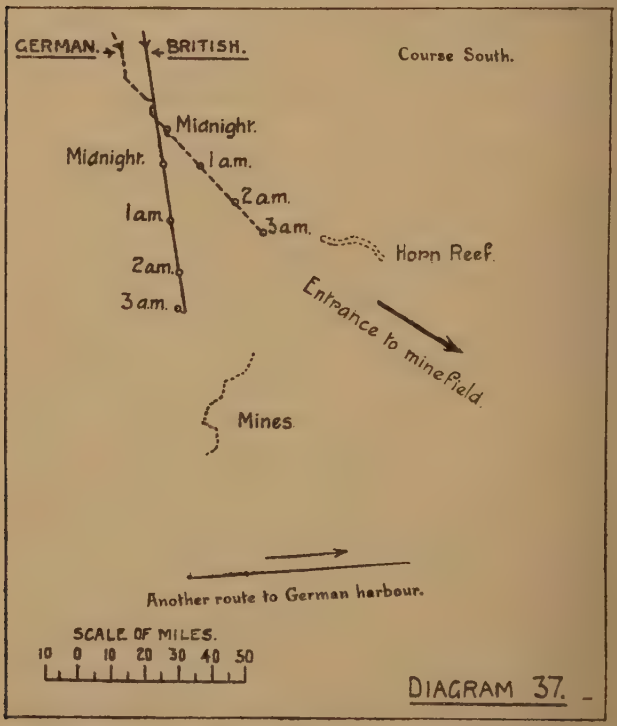
The *Champion* light cruiser, Captain Farie, and the *Faulkenor*, Captain Stirling, and four other destroyers, also sighted the enemy's large ships. The only vessel of these which made a report was the *Faulkenor*, who reported both before and after the attack, but his signals never got through. They were probably jammed by the German wireless.

In defence of the destroyers much can be said. They all made gallant attacks, and whether or not their signal appliances survived and were fit for use it is difficult to say; nor was it their duty to report other than to their immediate senior officer, who presumably had seen as much as they had.

But the *Malaya* and *Valiant* are in a totally different category. Here were two battleships with every signalling appliance and with experienced officers of rank in command, but who never informed the Commander-in-Chief, nor even their own Admiral, that the enemy was breaking through astern of them.

The escape of the German fleet must be attributed largely to the failure of the officers commanding these two ships to pass such vital information to the Admiral commanding their Division, or to the Commander-in-Chief. The *Champion*, Captain Farie, must share the blame. The reasons for this are given in Appendix C.

About 2.15 a.m. may be taken as the very latest time that an alteration in course by the Grand Fleet could have brought the German Fleet to a successful action. The last report received by Admiral Jellicoe was that of



the *Birmingham* at 11.30, which reported the enemy steering south.* Had the *Malaya* and *Valiant* reported at 11.30, the Grand Fleet could have headed off the Germans, and engaged them at daybreak.

* Parallel to that of the Grand Fleet.

As it was there was nothing to indicate that the German battlefleet was not still to the westward.

Admiral Jellicoe has stated that when steering south his original idea was to be off the Horn Reef at daylight, but that the difficulties experienced in collecting the fleet, particularly the destroyers, rendered this undesirable. It was, he states, obviously necessary to concentrate the battlefleet and destroyers before renewing action. This, of course, was a perfectly sound procedure provided that the enemy's fleet were not close enough to the Horn Reef to escape engagement before slipping in. This seemed improbable since no reports of large ships being sighted had been received from the ships astern, and it was almost inconceivable that they could have broken through the sixteen-mile screen without being sighted. It was therefore wise not to go prematurely, without destroyers, into waters that it was certain would be infested by submarines. Had the *Malaya* and *Valiant* reported the enemy as passing astern, there is no doubt that on such definite information our fleet would have been interposed between the enemy and their harbour and a considerable toll of them taken in the morning. G.F. 385

The *Faulkenor*, Captain Stirling, with the 1st division of the 12th flotilla, at 1.45 a.m. made a gallant attack and sank the *Pommern* in the half light of early morning, forcing the enemy temporarily off their course. Captain Stirling reported the presence of the battlefleet by wireless telegraphy, but, as before stated, the signal was jammed and never got through to any flagship of the fleet. Even had it been received it would have been too late to enable the Grand Fleet to reap a sweeping victory.

This was the last attack. When this passed off, the German fleet was only sixteen miles from the Horn Reef, and at 4 a.m. they entered the passage which they kept swept through our minefields.

At 4.15 Admiral Jellicoe received a message from the Admiralty to say that the German fleet at 2.30 were only III. 414

16 miles from the Horn Reef steering south-east at 16 knots. This meant the fleet had escaped.

There was nothing then to do except to pick up any lame ducks the enemy might have left behind in the night attack.

The Grand Fleet remained in the vicinity of the Horn Reef till noon, and then made its way north again at cruising speed.

Of course the general disappointment from Commander-in-Chief to seaman at the chance of a great victory on June 1st having been lost was great. But the 31st May settled for ever the desire of the German High Command for their battleships again to try conclusions with so efficient a fleet, and one, moreover, commanded by so sound a tactician as our Commander-in-Chief.

Although this short account of Jutland is intended only to explain in a popular way the phases of the main battle, it is impossible to end without saying a few words about the gallant actions of our destroyers.

While sombre, unromantic principles and direct calculations of final gain or loss to the country must govern the tactics of the battlefleet, in destroyer attacks officers and men have a vast scope for the display of initiative and gallantry.

To any of us who have borne the burden and heat of the peace development of the torpedo craft, and who have oft-times served in the early manœuvres of such vessels, and who have, perforce, over and over again attempted to visualize what night destroyer actions and attack in war would be like, the epic of our destroyers and the names of Bingham and the *Nomad*, Thomson and the *Petard*, Loftus Jones and the *Shark*, Wintour and the *Tipperary*, Trelawney and the *Spitfire*, Marsden and the *Ardent*, Tovey and the *Onslow*, Stirling and the *Faulkenor*, Terrey and the *Fortune*, will long remain in our memories.

Let us take some of the scraps as examples of the class of work done by our destroyers by day and during the night. We have already given an account of

Commander Loftus Jones and the *Shark*, one that should ever be remembered, an echo of Grenville in the *Revenge* in his centuries-old but never forgotten fight. Page 67

Captain Wintour and the "Tipperary"

Again, during the night of the 31st of May, Captain C. J. Wintour, of the *Tipperary*, and the leading boats of his solitary flotilla saw dimly the forms of enemy ships to starboard. They crept up to within 1,000 yards, when the enemy suddenly opened fire. Salvos, accurate and rapid, at point-blank range instantly broke on them. The *Tipperary* immediately burst into flames, but discharged both her torpedoes. All the boats attacked, several hits were claimed. The *Elbing* light cruiser received her death-blow and was rammed by the *Posen*; others also were probably damaged. Captain Wintour had done all that was possible and had made a gallant attack. The first salvo had swept away the *Tipperary's* bridge, and with it her gallant captain, and she was left a mere mass of burning wreckage. III. 397

Lieutenant-Commander Trelawney and the "Spitfire"

Lieutenant-Commander C. Trelawney, in the *Spitfire*, was next astern of the *Tipperary*. His torpedo reloading gear had been disabled; unable to fire torpedoes he deliberately with his guns smashed the enemy's search-light and then turned back to the assistance of the *Tipperary*. Suddenly he saw two German cruisers bearing down on him. He wrote afterwards, "The nearer one altered course to ram me apparently. I therefore put my helm hard a-port, and the two ships (*i.e.*, the *Spitfire* and a German cruiser) rammed each other port bow to port bow. . . . I consider I must have considerably damaged the cruiser, as twenty feet of her side plating was left on my forecastle." III. 398

Cannot the scene well be imagined? The dark, the grim forms of the ships silhouetted, the high speed, the

sudden heel over of the boat under helm, then the smash, the grinding tear, the flash of the gun, and then blindness from the gunflash, stupefaction, and once more nothing but night and darkness.

"Broke," "Sparrowhawk" and "Garland"

Again another scene but a few minutes later with the same flotilla. The *Broke*, Commander Allen, had taken the *Tipperary's* place as leader of the flotilla, and saw
III. 399 a large ship heading to cross his course; again a blaze of searchlights and gunfire. The *Broke* swung to port to bring her torpedo tubes to bear. The *Sparrowhawk* did the same, but the *Broke* was out of control by the damage done from the gunfire; with her steering gear jammed she could not steady her helm, so swung right round and crashed into the *Sparrowhawk* just before her bridge.

The next boat, the *Garland*, missed the two thus locked together by a foot, but before the next in the line, the *Contest*, had time to avoid them she cut five feet off the *Broke's* stern!

Lieutenant-Commander Thomson and the "Petard"

III. 339 Let us end with the *Petard*, Lieutenant-Commander Thomson, who had a cheerful day and night. With the battle cruisers in Phase I., at the time when the *Nestor* and *Nomad* were disabled, he torpedoed the leading German destroyer, *V 27*. Coming across the *Nestor* practically disabled, he offered to tow her; but as the German battlefleet were coming fast up astern, Commander Bingham refused to let the *Petard* run the almost certain risk of destruction, so he followed the battle cruisers up to the Grand Fleet.

Again at 4.50 the *Petard* and *Nicator* attacked the Ger-
III. 342 man cruisers, and the *Petard* torpedoed the *Seydlitz*. Lastly, at 12.25 a.m., the *Petard* again came across the German fleet; being one of the four last boats of the 13th flotilla, her captain sighted a dark mass only 600

yards away bearing close down on him. It was a German battleship, but bitter was the luck of the *Petard*, for in her previous actions she had fired all her torpedoes; as she turned sullenly away, she only just escaped being rammed by the battleship. The destroyer that had so often attacked was impotent to do anything but retreat. The *Petard* was fortunate enough to escape with but small damage, but close by she saw her companion, the *Turbulent*, crashed into and sunk by the leading German battleship. III. 405

Such was the work and excitement of the destroyers. Attacks and hair-breadth escapes followed each other in quick succession whenever our vessels had the good fortune to fight the Germans in the darkness of the night.

Criticisms have been directed against the Admiralty for ordering back Commodore Tyrwhitt's destroyers to Harwich at 5.15 p.m. on the 31st May, after he started to join the Grand Fleet.

Commodore Tyrwhitt, who, beyond all officers, earned the greatest reputation for gallantry and leadership during the war; and moreover earned it in spite of absolute self-effacement and hatred of advertisement, was the commodore in command of the destroyers at Harwich. It had always been understood that in case of a fleet action being imminent he was at once to join the Commander-in-Chief. At 4.50 Admiral Jellicoe signalled to the Admiralty, "Fleet action is imminent." This was enough for Commodore Tyrwhitt. Anxious to be off at once, he asked for instructions. At 5.15 none came, so he informed the Admiralty that he was off to join the Grand Fleet. His message to the Admiralty crossed one to him telling him to "Complete with fuel; you may have to relieve light cruisers and destroyers in battle cruiser fleet later." This was a bad dash to his ardour which he did not accept. He kept on steering north while awaiting an answer to his signal. Twenty minutes later he got the order, "Return at once and await orders." III. 414

Now this seems at first sight to have deliberately

deprived the Grand Fleet of a magnificent force on the eve of battle. But let us look into the matter a little closer. The Admiralty had no clear indication at the time that the enemy's forces in the North were not intended as a cover to a raid on the Straits of Dover; such a raid might have done immense damage to our shipping. The Harwich force and the Third Battle Squadron of old battleships lying in the entrance to the Thames were the only force worth mentioning in the South. It was from the Admiralty point of view imperative to keep the Harwich force in the southern part of the North Sea until the situation became clear. Moreover, the Grand Fleet was well supplied with destroyers and light cruisers at the time. As a matter of fact, if Commodore Tyrwhitt had left at 5 p.m. on May 31st, he could not have been in touch with the Grand Fleet till 4 a.m. the next morning without exhausting all his fuel. His arrival, therefore, would have been at too late an hour for him to have participated in any part of the action. So the Admiralty decision was not only a wise one, but in no way militated against success in the battle. When all chance of a raid south was over, that is at 3 a.m., the Commodore was ordered north and arrived in time to relieve and supplement the divisions badly mauled in the night action.

PART III

THE SCANDAL

CHAPTER X

THE ADMIRALTY NARRATIVE

Interest aroused—Sir Rosslyn Wemyss's committee—Report suppressed—Unreliability of memory—Rumours—Jutland Papers issued—Admiralty Narrative sent to Lord Jellicoe—My association—Issue of the Narrative—Disappointment—Official History of the War—Example of omission—Unfair statements regarding Lord Jellicoe—Unfair statements regarding Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas—By whose authority?—Effect on the Navy.

THE publication of the Admiralty official account of the Battle of Jutland has been looked forward to with both interest and apprehension—interest, in the hope that it might contain new facts, especially from foreign sources, and apprehension because of the sinister rumours that have shrouded its conception and birth. Our hopes have been doomed to disappointment and our apprehensions have been confirmed.

Some months after the armistice, Admiral Sir R. Wemyss, then the First Sea Lord, appointed a committee to prepare a report on the Battle of Jutland. Captain J. Harper was appointed president of the committee, since at that time he was Director of Navigation, and therefore officially the proper person to supervise the charting. Moreover, not having been present at the

battle, he was free from all bias of association. Sir Rosslyn Wemyss approved of the report, but before it could be issued he had left the Admiralty and the succeeding Board suppressed it.

Not infrequently when cold, hard facts are charted the result does not agree with the impressions that moments of excitement may have implanted in the memory. So when the report showed that the battle cruisers took but a small part in the battlefleet action, and were practically out of the fight that took place at 7.10 p.m., owing to being to the eastward of the battlefleet, something approaching to incredulity and consternation reigned. On the other hand, the plotting of the positions of the German Fleet showed that Admiral Jellicoe's manœuvres were the best possible under the varying conditions of the action.

Then rumour after rumour floated out from the Admiralty and passed from mouth to mouth of the sea-gossips in London : " Harper had been ordered to alter his report ; " " Had refused ; " " Had been threatened with My Lords' displeasure ; " " Had stuck to his refusal ; " etc. Then, lastly, " As Harper had refused to alter his report My Lords were going to alter it for him." These reports went forth in ever-widening circles throughout the Navy and the country. What exactly followed is a bureaucratic mystery. The Admiralty apparently stood by their suppression of the Harper report, but promised to issue a Staff appreciation of the battle later. Meanwhile, the Government published a collection of original documents known popularly as the " Jutland Papers." It seems also that some undertaking was given by the Admiralty to Lord Jellicoe to the effect that the new report being prepared as a substitute for Captain Harper's would not be published until he had seen the draft.

Lord Jellicoe left for New Zealand in the latter part of 1920. The " Admiralty Narrative " was sent out to Lord Jellicoe. This he examined, and took objection to a considerable portion. He must have been placed in a most difficult position being in the Antipodes, and

having to deal with a document in which innuendo was present and in which facts were glossed over and suppressed. He replied to the document and asked that his corrections should be included in the Narrative, or at all events his remarks printed, otherwise he would have to issue separate publications.

In view of the possibility of the latter alternative, Lord Jellicoe asked me to undertake such publication if necessary, and I consented. I felt, however, that it was only right that I should inform the First Lord of the Admiralty that I had done so. I therefore called on Mr. Amery in 1923 by appointment, and told him of my consent. At the same time I took advantage of my rank and experience of the Navy to appeal to him to appoint an independent committee—I suggested the three Hydrographers of the Navy last retired—to inquire into the Harper and the Admiralty chartings, and to say which one was correct—or, as was possible, if both were correct. I also pointed out that the Navy looked to him as First Lord to see that the balance was truly held and that no biassed report was issued. He promised to look closely into the matter, but I heard no more from him.

As I left the Admiralty I told a naval officer of high rank and holding a prominent appointment in that office what my business with the First Lord had been. His remark, "Thank God! I hope he will do it," showed that the opinion of some officers in the Admiralty regarding the report was much the same as that of the Navy generally.

In August, 1924, the Narrative was issued, and as it contained Lord Jellicoe's remarks, I refrained from publishing the papers confided to me, in which procedure Lord Jellicoe concurred, and has since asked me to make no use of the papers for any purpose whatever.

The Narrative confirmed the apprehensions originated by the rumours referred to. To the technical reader, versed in naval operations and terms, as well as in the sentiment of the Navy, a nasty flavour pervades the whole narrative. Let us take some examples.

We have already discussed the failure of the Admiral commanding the Battle Cruiser Fleet to keep in touch with the German Battlefleet on the run north back to the Grand Fleet. The result was that at the time of
Page 74 sighting Admiral Jellicoe's flagship he was unable to give the latter accurate information of the position of the enemy's battleships. Since this failure delayed the deployment of our fleet, and in all probability altered the nature of the deployment, the matter is of surpassing interest to the technical reader.

The Official History of the War states: "As soon as he (Admiral Jellicoe) made out our battle cruisers heading across his bows and engaged with an unseen enemy, he flashed to Admiral Beatty the query, 'Where is the
III. 336 enemy's battlefleet?' (6.1 p.m.). . . . Just then (6.6 p.m.) Admiral Beatty . . . flashed back his reply to the Commander-in-Chief's query, but it only said, 'Enemy's battle cruisers bearing S.E.' This did no more than deepen the obscurity. . . . The Commander-in-Chief
III. 361 repeated to Admiral Beatty, 'Where is the enemy's battlefleet?' . . . at 6.14. . . . Admiral Beatty signalled, 'Have sighted the enemy's battlefleet bearing S.S.W.'"

What we find in the "Admiralty Narrative" is this: "Hardly had the columns turned south than the sound of heavy firing indicated the close proximity of the enemy's heavy ships, and the *Lion* signalled (6.6) that the enemy's battle cruisers bore S.E. . . . About 6.14 p.m., and
A.N. 42 almost simultaneously, a signal came in from *Lion* reporting them (enemy's battleships) in sight S.S.W."

That is all. Nothing more. The whole episode glossed over and the important facts never mentioned.

Two other examples will be sufficient. On page 62 we find: "Admiral Beatty turned at once to the sound of the guns." But on page 64 we read: "At 8.15, when the two fleets were again coming into contact, the British Fleet was in divisions steering west. . . . A few minutes later the guns of the *Calliope* and the Fourth Light Cruiser Squadron could be heard to the westward.

Touch had evidently been regained, and at 8.21 the Commander-in-Chief altered course to W.S.W. *two points away from the enemy.*"

The italics are mine. The impression conveyed is that as soon as the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Jellicoe, heard the guns he altered course away from the enemy —else why add these words gratuitously after W.S.W.? The truth so skilfully hidden by the "Admiralty Narrative" was: First, the enemy was out of sight and his exact whereabouts unknown; secondly, that Admiral Jellicoe altered course towards the sound of guns which bore from him W.S.W., or even a little more still southward of that bearing. That the firing was to the west*ward* was true, for the west*ward* was W.S.W., the course altered to by Admiral Jellicoe. III. plan 41

Again, dealing with the escape of the German fleet at night, we read, pages 75 and 76, "Admiral Beatty was still in ignorance of the enemy's course to the south-eastward, and imagined him to be to the westward. The battle cruisers had been too far ahead to observe the route of the High Sea Fleet *as indicated by the destroyer actions.*"

Now the portion I have italicized can only mean:

1.—That the route of the High Sea Fleet *was* indicated by the destroyer actions.

2.—That had the battle cruisers been less far ahead their Admiral would have interpreted the course of the German Battlefleet from the fighting that went on during the night between the destroyers and light cruisers belonging to the two fleets.

Let us see what inferences were drawn from the destroyer actions by the two Admirals nearest to that attack.

Admiral Evan Thomas, commanding the battleship division near this fighting, in no way interpreted it as indicating the presence of the enemy's battlefleet, since in his dispatch after the battle he reports: "At 10.15 observed heavy firing a little abaft the starboard beam which I surmised to be attacks by enemy destroyers and

light craft on our light cruisers and destroyers. . . .
J.P. 195 At 10.34 heavy firing was observed on our starboard quarter, and destroyers appeared to be attacking the cruisers. At 11.35 a further attack was seen further off right astern. No further incident occurred until the Second Battle Squadron was observed ahead three to five miles at early dawn."

Admiral Sir Cecil Burney, who was also near the
J.P. 67 fighting, reported after the battle : " Four night attacks were observed during the night. The first on the starboard beam, others taking place in succession towards the stern ; several explosions were heard, and two very large ones with flame shooting into the sky were seen. Star shells were seen. . . . About midnight smoke was observed ahead of *Marlborough*, which crossed from starboard to port, and back again to starboard, and then came down the starboard (western) side. It appeared to be a large ship and was challenged by *Revenge*, who was answered by two letters, though they were not the correct ones. She then disappeared."

There was no suggestion that the torpedo attack indicated that the High Sea Fleet were passing astern. The *Marlborough* was six miles off the leading German battleship when it passed astern, while the *Iron Duke* was ten miles off.

It is therefore grossly unfair to hint that Admiral Jellicoe should have drawn an inference which was not apparent to two Admirals four miles nearer to the fighting.

The point raised by Lord Jellicoe regarding the alleged injustice to Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas would have been
A.N. 107 more courteously answered by the Admiralty had they quoted portions of Admiral Beatty's dispatch after the action: " Led by Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas, M.V.O., in *Barham*, the squadron (5th Battle) supported us
J.P. 134 brilliantly and effectively."

Again : " I have already made mention of the brilliant support afforded by Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas, M.V.O.,
J.P. 141 and the Fifth Battle Squadron."

These quotations would have been more generous than the nagging footnote in reply to Lord Jellicoe's remarks. A.N. 107, *footnote*

I will pass by the discourteous tone in which the replies to Lord Jellicoe's criticisms are framed, which must strike anyone who is accustomed to the traditions of official courtesy.

It is needless to dive further into the Narrative and produce more examples of inaccuracies. But it is interesting to inquire first who wrote the Narrative? and secondly, to consider what useful purpose it can serve.

That it was not passed by the Board of Admiralty is evident, as it lacks the usual official notice to say that it is published with the approval of the Board. Yet My Lords express opinions in the footnotes to Appendix G. Why do My Lords speak in the footnotes and yet not approve the Narrative? It looks very much as if the Naval Staff prepared the Narrative expecting the Board to take the responsibility of acknowledging it, and that the Board refused to do so!

The Narrative as a literary production is poor; the writers rarely allow themselves to depart from a dull monotony of technical words. We were, however, cheered to find that this reserve was occasionally departed from, for we read: "That in the lull hours (*sic*), between 5.10 and 5.40, Admiral Beatty may have found time to review the state of his force." A.N. 22 Again just below: "Every minute, too, was bringing them nearer and nearer to the Grand Fleet, and the Vice-Admiral (Beatty) could look forward with confidence to a renewal of the action." These must have escaped the observation of My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, who we notice are, in their footnotes, particularly vigilant, and reprove any inference made by Lord Jellicoe by pointing out that the Narrative is a narrative of fact only. A.N. 106 *footnote* 2; 113 *footnotes* 3 and 6

In conclusion, the Narrative serves no useful purpose. If intended as a serious Staff production, it brings discredit on the Naval Staff at the Admiralty. If intended as a popular narrative it fails equally, as it is quite unintelligible to the man-in-the-street. When compared

with Sir Julian Corbett's account of the battle it fails in composition, in clearness, in interest, and in balance of judgment. Are we really to believe that the Narrative represents the best effort of our much-vaunted Naval Staff after nearly four years of labour ?

There is, however, a serious side to the whole episode, namely, the effect the history of the publication will have in lowering the opinion of the Navy of its Admiralty. A narrative issued by the Admiralty should have been full, straightforward, and free from bias, outspoken and fully concurred in by all Flag Officers and Commodores on matters within their own knowledge, or the reasons for any divergence of views stated impartially. Admiralty work should be above cavil and suspicion. Judged from these standards the Narrative fails miserably, and therefore the high status of the Admiralty with the Navy has been correspondingly compromised for the first time within the memory of man. The only redeeming feature so far as the relations of the Admiralty with the Narrative are concerned is the apparent refusal of the Board to issue it under their authority and with their benediction. Admiral Wemyss's Board passed the original report ; the present Narrative has not received Board sanction. It had been far better to have stopped its issue altogether and to have issued in its stead the original report of the independent committee set up by Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss.

CHAPTER XI

THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK

Admiral Scheer's criticism of the *Daily Express* correspondent
Extracts from Mr. Filson Young's article, with explanatory notes
—The "leader" on the article, with explanatory notes.

Admiral Scheer's Bombshell

WHEN the official narrative of the Battle of Jutland was issued the *Daily Express* published what purported to be a recent interview with Admiral Scheer, highly uncomplimentary to Lord Jellicoe, on which aspect of the interview the *Daily Express* Special Correspondent did not fail to enlarge.

Unfortunately the *Daily Telegraph* of August 16th published a letter from Admiral Scheer to the *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag*, which stated :

"The account in the *Daily Express* published without my foreknowledge is a gross misrepresentation of a conversation which I had with an English correspondent in 1922.

"In his report the English correspondent does not completely suppress the explanation given by me, but in a not very gentlemanly manner has not hesitated to deceive the English reader by the misleading title, 'How I escaped at Jutland,' and by a false date."

We consider it impossible to deal thoroughly with Mr. Filson Young's article—which was the cause of writing

this book—without quoting it verbatim, as it is redolent of innuendo and inaccurate assertions.

However, for the moment we will content ourselves with quoting a few statements to indicate the nature of the whole article.

We will commence with the following extract :

> Whereas no one can find a technical fault with Admiral Jellicoe's deployment, which was strictly according to the rules. The only trouble lay in the fact that at 6.15 in the evening, and in the midst of a battle, there is not always time to observe the rules of the parade ground. Opportunity was there, but opportunity did not wait long enough for Admiral Jellicoe. The real moment flashed up and was gone while he was waiting for it still to come.

It is true that there would have been a quicker way had Lord Beatty at 6 p.m. been able to supply Lord Jellicoe with the exact position of the German battle-fleet. In the absence of this information Lord Jellicoe's method of deployment was absolutely the correct one.

He was waiting for Lord Beatty to tell him where the German fleet was. The failure of the latter to do so nearly caused the moment to slip.

Later on we find :

> The plan and the principle were, *not to risk the Grand Fleet.*

The plan was to act sanely and not like a lunatic. Would any reasonable person risk losing eight battle-ships to save for a few minutes only 1,800 yards in range ?

Again :

> With that risk he played throughout his marvellous fighting chase towards and return from the south-east at Jutland, when he brought back the whole German High Seas Fleet and laid it, as a cat brings you a mouse, at Jellicoe's feet.

This is delightful! The cat ran away from the mouse and lost sight of it in twenty minutes, and never saw it again. When asked where the mouse was the cat had to confess it didn't know! !

Also :

> At 7 o'clock on the evening of Jutland, when Beatty led the German Fleet in a state of confusion into the jaws of a trap from which there should have been no escape, and out of which Admiral Scheer admits he did not expect to escape.

We must here halt to insert the diagram which otherwise there would have been no reason to publish. But the misstatement is so glaring and uncalled for that it needs stamping on.

By 7 p.m. Lord Jellicoe had manœuvred the fleet between the enemy and his harbour. In this, Lord Beatty, a junior admiral obeying the orders of his Commander-in-Chief, had no hand at all. At 6.50 Admiral Scheer turned his ships round and got the head of the line of his battleships and battle cruisers in the positions shown by X and W at 7.12. In the meantime our fleet, altering course to where the German fleet was hidden in the mist, had got into the position marked T T T T T T.

Between 6.55 and 7.12 Admiral Beatty had been having a little circle-turning of his own at the place marked Z. If any confusion existed at all, it was not in the German fleet but in our own battle cruiser fleet, who waltzed round like a kitten after its own tail. It is believed the reason for this excitement was a gyro compass that went wrong; but at all events Admiral Beatty, far from *leading the Germans into a trap from which there was no escape*, was busy trying to straighten up confusion among his cruisers.

Z.
Canterbury.
Lion.
Falmouth.
DIAGRAM 38.
T.
T.
T.
T.
T.
T.
BRITISH BATTLE FLEET.
W.
7·12
GERMAN
BATTLE
CRUISERS.
X.
7·12
GERMAN BATTLE FLEET.

The Origin of the Book

We will end with the following :

> For that his glorious three thousand died. But if the judgment that made Admiral Jellicoe turn away from grasping the prize for fear that the Grand Fleet might be injured in the process was a right judgment, then the men of the *Queen Mary, Invincible,* and *Indefatigable* died in vain.

Let us be quite frank. The battle cruisers steamed at high speed away from the German battlefleet and left the 5th Battle Squadron to fight them. The men of the *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable* did not die in vain. But their loss was largely caused by not bringing the 5th Battle Squadron into action until the *Indefatigable* had been sunk and only a few minutes before the *Queen Mary* was blown up.

The *Invincible* was not lost in the cruiser action, Phase I., but in Phase II. of the battlefleet action by suddenly coming under fire of the German battleships as they emerged from the mist.

THE LEADING ARTICLE IN THE "SUNDAY EXPRESS" OF THE SAME DATE.

Admiral Scheer exploded a new Jutland bombshell in the columns of the *Daily Express.* He gave at last his own frank view of the most controversial fleet action in history. He went much further than he had gone in his published work, and declared roundly that Admiral Jellicoe had thrown away a chance of annihilating the German High Seas Fleet, giving chapter and verse for his assertion.

He shortly after exploded a second one under Mr. Filson Young and the editor of the *Sunday Express.* *Vide* page 109.

The Jutland Scandal

The Scheer bombshell has been the talk of England for four days. It has revived the whole controversy in an acute form and set the world wondering again. Admiral Jellicoe replied to Admiral Scheer yesterday through the columns of the *Evening Standard*. He denies his assertions, declares that the German "turn all together" was made before the British "turn away," recalls familiar circumstances of the battle, and declares unequivocally that other tactics on his part would have exposed the Grand Fleet to possible or probable disaster. We publish on this page a striking article by Mr. Filson Young, who was specially equipped for understanding the minds of Lord Beatty and Lord Jellicoe, and who had seen in practice the very manœuvre which, according to Lord Jellicoe's critics, lost us the chance of devastating victory. He gives us Lord Beatty's criticism of this manœuvre. "If he does this when he meets the Germans he cannot win."

Lord Jellicoe did not win. Jutland—"the battle that

In spite of the controversy being revived the *Sunday Express* refused to print a reply to Mr. Filson Young's article.

I should doubt Mr. Filson Young's ability to understand Lord Jellicoe's mind.

The manœuvre Lord Beatty used twice himself and both times wrongly.

was never fought," as Beatty described it—was inconclusive. The vindication of Lord Jellicoe is to be sought in the fact that the German High Seas Fleet never ventured out again, and that it came to humiliating surrender at Scapa Flow, where it still rots at the bottom of the seas it challenged. For the rest the controversy remains. One critic says one thing and one another. The belated official account of the battle eight years after it was fought has left the layman as bewildered as ever. The rival statements of Scheer and Jellicoe leave the conflict of evidence and opinion to be settled by personal inclination to one side or another.

The report was belated because the Admiralty suppressed the report of independent experts and issued one edited by the Admiralty.

What of the man in the street? He will read Mr. Filson Young's lucid article with vivid interest.

Yes, and owing to the action of the *Sunday Express*, he will now be able to read the reply to it.

He is inclined to think that the British Navy lost its golden hour of glorious opportunity.

Owing to misrepresentation of facts this has been his opinion.

Lord Jellicoe, himself a man of rare and splendid courage, was no doubt a victim. He was caught in

He, with the assistance of his staff and admirals of experience, laid down certain rules to be followed in

the machine that he had fashioned, enveloped in the Admiralty red tape of which he had himself tied the knots, bound by his own rules.

certain emergencies. It is this class of quiet thought before a battle that leads to success, and saves disaster.

He was in the midst of the indescribable carnage and chaos of a fleet action.

He was not. Owing to his fine tactic of crossing the enemy's T, the good training he had given to his battleships and their excellent shooting, there was no carnage in the *Iron Duke*, and throughout the fleet there was no chaos.

He was obsessed by the fear of risking the Grand Fleet.

He was obsessed by no fear. But he and every other admiral of experience knew that unless at certain times he performed certain manœuvres he would be gambling away the chance of thrashing the enemy.

If he had lost it by recklessness which achieved no overwhelming triumph he would have been execrated and abhorred. He would have exposed us defenceless to invasion, and the war would have been lost to the Allies. He did not risk the Grand Fleet, we were not invaded, the war was won for the Allies, and the German Fleet scuppered itself in British waters after unconditional surrender.

We do not suppose such an idea entered Lord Jellicoe's head. An admiral or general rarely, if ever, during an operation thinks of himself or his reputation, but he does most earnestly consider the success of the business in hand. In Lord Jellicoe's case this was the sinking of the High Sea Fleet.

Yes. But if Beatty had been in command? If we had closed the trap, taken the risks, fought to a finish? That is the "if" that sticks.

If Lord Beatty, an inexperienced admiral, had been in command, what then?

The Grand Fleet would have suffered in its training. He would have turned away from a massed torpedo attack just as Lord Jellicoe did, or else he would have lost several battleships and seriously reduced the margin of strength of our fleet over that of the German fleet.

But the Battle Cruiser Squadron would have been under the command of an experienced admiral who might have sunk several of the German cruisers without the loss of the *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*, and who would have given Lord Beatty, in command of the Grand Fleet, early information of the position of the German fleet, and therefore he might have deployed as correctly as Lord Jellicoe did.

Trafalgar might have been outdone by a Naval victory more complete and as decisive.

This could not be the result of a modern sea fight. Lord Beatty could have done no more damage to the Germans than was done by Lord Jellicoe. No one has ever suggested in what way more damage could have been done.

The page of our Naval History might have been illuminated as never before.	The page of our Naval History might, on the other hand, have recorded a defeat owing to inexperience in organization, training and tactics.
The war might have been shortened.	No one has ever suggested how this could have been done.
There is no disposition to misunderstand Lord Jellicoe.	It is not a misunderstanding of Lord Jellicoe that is the cause of the trouble, but the utter inability of the writer to understand the fundamental elements of Naval tactics or to appreciate what sea and fleet experience means to a man who is in command of a fleet.
That " if " still sticks.	That " if " is the handful of mud, some of which was sure to stick if thrown at Lord Jellicoe; hence this leader. However, sufficient has been written in this book to make that " if " to stick to some purpose in the mind of the nation, though not exactly in the manner in which the *Sunday Express* appears to have hoped.

CHAPTER XII

THE "IF" THAT STICKS

The Admiralty telegrams—Effect on the public—Their disappointment—Critics of Lord Jellicoe—Jutland not a glorious victory—Unfortunate treatment of the history of Jutland by the Admiralty—Lord Beatty's failure to support his late Commander-in-Chief—Comparison of Lord Jellicoe and Lord Beatty—Their pre-war experience—Mr. Churchill's reason for appointing Lord Beatty to command the Battle Cruiser Squadron—Performance of Lord Jellicoe in War—Lord Beatty's performance—His failures—Training of the fleet—Failure of the Battle Cruisers in gunnery and in signal efficiency—Conclusions drawn.

UNDOUBTEDLY the criticism to which Lord Jellicoe has been subjected, sprang chiefly from the disappointment of the Nation at large that the German fleet had been fought and not annihilated. The disappointment was considerably augmented by the bald announcement made by the Admiralty as to the result of the action. The position of the Admiralty was one of difficulty. They knew our own losses from Admiral Jellicoe, but neither they nor Admiral Jellicoe knew what damage had been done to the German fleet. The Admiralty could not say more than they knew; they had at all costs to avoid exaggeration. Their announcement ran:

"The Secretary of the Admiralty makes the following announcement:

"On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 31st, a Naval engagement took place off the coast of Jutland.

"The British ships on which the brunt of the fighting fell were the Battle Cruiser Fleet, and some cruisers and light cruisers, supported by four fast battleships.

"Among those the losses were heavy.

"The German Battle Fleet, aided by low visibility, avoided prolonged action with our main forces, and soon after these appeared on the scene the enemy returned to port, though not before receiving severe damage from our battleships.

"The battle cruisers, *Queen Mary*, *Indefatigable*, *Invincible* and the cruisers *Defence* and *Black Prince* were sunk. The *Warrior* was disabled, and after being towed for some time had to be abandoned by her crew.

"It is also known that the destroyers *Tipperary*, *Turbulent*, *Fortune*, *Sparrowhawk* and *Ardent* were lost, and six others are not yet accounted for.

"No British battleships or light cruisers were sunk.

"The enemy's losses were serious.

"At least one battle cruiser was destroyed and one severely damaged; one battleship reported sunk by our destroyers during a night attack; two light cruisers were disabled and probably sunk.

"The exact number of enemy destroyers disposed of during the night attack cannot be ascertained with any certainty, but it must have been large"

Of course everyone jumped to the conclusion that this message covered a disaster, and that the Admiralty had not said all that they knew.

The only alternative to the Admiralty statement would have been one, on much the same lines, but with an addition to say that the engagement occurred too late in the day for a signal success to have been obtained, and that the enemy ran under shelter of darkness back to their harbour.

But it is doubtful if such a statement even would have allayed disappointment.

The Public had been convinced from the moment the war started that if the German fleet was ever engaged

by our battlefleet the majority of their ships would be sunk. A battle had been fought and they were not sunk; *ergo* someone was at fault. The man in the street did not trouble himself to learn the facts or to grasp that an enemy who runs away cannot be overtaken unless the ships chasing him have greater speed and sufficient time in which to overtake him. He knew nothing about the Navy or modern fighting at sea; he looked on those matters as the business of the Navy which it was not necessary for him to understand. He knew little of sea fighting except what he had read had happened in the old days. Then Nelson sunk French ship after French ship. Where was our Nelson?

Then rumour seized on the deployment on the tooth-of-the-comb furthest from the German fleet. Shades of Nelson! Fancy not getting as near to the enemy as possible! It was never explained to him that deployment on the tooth nearest the enemy did not mean that the enemy would be sighted nearer to our fleet than when the deployment was carried out on the tooth furthest away from the enemy; or that such a deployment would not have helped to bring about a closer range action; that it merely meant the enemy would be sighted a quarter of an hour later; but in that quarter of an hour our fleet would have obtained a position of great advantage instead of being caught in one of disadvantage. None of these things were explained to the people of this country.

Page 47, 54

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To turn away from the enemy during a fight simply because of an attack being made by puny destroyers carrying torpedoes, again seemed to savour of undue caution and of a desire not to press the engagement. The man in the street was never told that the chances were that two out of every five torpedoes in such an attack would hit ships; that such a manœuvre had been fully discussed and agreed to by all the admirals, and was used by every admiral who was confronted by such an attack throughout the war. He was never

Page 28

told that such a turn *away* was merely a swing for a few minutes and then a swing back; the counterpart of the step back of a boxer to avoid a blow.

Further, Admiral Beatty's signal to say that if the van of the battlefleet followed him he could cut off the enemy's fleet was interpreted to mean that, had Admiral Beatty commanded at the battle, the German fleet would have been cut off from their harbours. It was never explained that the German fleet had already been cut off from their harbours, that the ships the Vice-Admiral had sighted were part of the same division that were on sight at the same moment from Admiral Jellicoe and the ships near him, eleven miles off from Admiral Beatty.

"Why did not Jellicoe go right at the German fleet?" was also asked. No one answered; so the nation grumbled and rumour passed from mouth to mouth. Jutland was condemned as a poor affair, and people thought, and said, that had Admiral Beatty commanded at Jutland things would have been very different and the German fleet would have been annihilated.

No one wishes to pretend that Jutland was a glorious victory. It was not. No glorious victory was possible under the daylight conditions that prevailed on May 31st.

A victory was lost on the morning of 1st June by the failure of responsible subordinates during the previous night; but so far as the actual battle is concerned it is an action of which our nation and our battlefleet may well be proud.

The Germans were out-fought and out-manœuvred; they could not be annihilated. They scurried back to their harbours determined never to risk another action with our battlefleet. Strategically, for the remainder of the war they might as well have been at the bottom of the North Sea. The one blot of magnitude was the failure of the rear ships during the night to report the presence of German battleships. But so far as the daylight action of the 31st May is concerned the battle is one that may well be looked on

with pride, even though adverse conditions wrested from our fleet a more sweeping victory.

Every individual, in his private life, is free to set himself an ideal, and to live up to his own standards of chivalry. When, however, a man joins an association of his fellows, be it Army, Navy, or any of the professions, it is well for him to conform to the time-honoured traditions of that profession.

Now Lord Beatty, merely as Lord Beatty, had a perfect right to decide whether he would, or would not, say a few words to instruct public opinion on the matters on which Lord Jellicoe was being attacked. But the traditions of the British Navy impelled such action on the part of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Beatty towards his old Commander-in-Chief, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Jellicoe. Admiral of the Fleet Lord Beatty was receiving wholesale on behalf of the Navy the many honours that the country, in their gratitude, showered on the Senior Service. This failure in chivalry on his part at such a time will never be forgotten or forgiven by the Royal Navy.

One of the misfortunes that has arisen from the refusal of the Admiralty to publish the Harper report has been the Press campaign that has been carried on, eulogizing Lord Beatty and disparaging Lord Jellicoe. Lord Beatty's silence has inevitably compromised his reputation as an Admiral, since his silence must be taken as a tacit agreement with those criticisms. Page 102

One point hitherto ineradicably fixed in the minds of many people of this country and fostered by the admirers of Lord Beatty is, that had he commanded at Jutland we would have obtained a crushing victory. So tenaciously has this view been hinted at, that it is necessary to examine the evidence for and against the insinuation. Page 11

Comparisons are proverbially odious, and had it not been for the fact that such comparisons have constantly been made and issued broadcast, we would never have entered on so invidious a discussion.

The Jutland Scandal

Let us compare the pre-war training of these two Admirals.

Navy List of these years.

	Lord Jellicoe.	*Lord Beatty.*
1880	Sub-Lieut. *Alexandra* flagship, Mediterranean.	
1881	Lieutenant *Agincourt.*	
1882	Lieutenant *Agincourt.*	
1883	R.N. College Gunnery Course.	
1884	*Excellent* — Gunnery Course.	
1885	*Excellent* — Gunnery Staff.	
1886	Gunnery Lieutenant *Monarch.*	
1887	Gunnery Lieutenant *Monarch.*	
1888	Gunnery Lieutenant *Monarch.*	
1889	*Excellent* Senior Staff.	
1890	*Excellent* Senior Staff.	
1891	Admiralty - Assistant to Director Naval Ordnance.	
1892	Admiralty.	Sub-Lieutenant *Nile.*
1893	Commander *Victoria,* flagship, Mediterranean Squadron.	Lieutenant *Ruby.*
1894	Commander *Ramillies* (ditto).	Lieutenant *Camperdown.*
1895	Commander *Ramillies* (ditto).	Lieutenant *Camperdown.*
1896	Commander *Ramillies* (ditto).	Lieutenant *Trafalgar.*
1897	*Unemployed.*	Soudan Campaign.
1898	Captain *Centurion,* flagship, China station.	Commander in the Soudan Campaign.

	Lord Jellicoe.	*Lord Beatty.*
1899	Captain *Centurion* (ditto), landed and wounded ashore	Commander *Barfleur*, landed and wounded ashore
1900	Captain *Centurion* (ditto).	Commander *Barfleur.*
1901	Captain *Centurion* (ditto).	
1902	Admiralty, Naval Assistant to Controller	Captain *Juno.*
1903	Admiralty, Naval Assistant toController.	Captain *Arrogant.*
1904	Captain *Drake.*	Captain *Suffolk.*
1905	Captain *Drake.*	
1906	Director Naval Ordnance.	
1907	Rear-Admiral *Atlantic Fleet.*	Naval Adviser to Army Council.
1908	Controller of the Navy.	Naval Adviser to Army Council.
1909	Controller of the Navy.	Captain *Queen.*
1910	Vice-Admiral *Atlantic Fleet.*	
1911	Vice-Admiral *Atlantic Fleet.*	
1912	Vice-Admiral in *Home Fleet.*	Naval Secretary to 1st Lord.
1913	Commander - in - Chief *Red Fleet,** Naval Manœuvres.	Naval Secretary *R.-A. 6th Cruiser Squadron.**

* For Naval Manœuvres. Two months' appointment.

Many may wonder how it was that a Rear-Admiral with so little sea-going experience as a commissioned officer, and practically none as an Admiral, came to command the Battle Cruiser Fleet during the war. The answer is to be found in Mr. Winston Churchill's book, 'The World Crisis." We will quote the passage verbatim

for fear that any possible misrepresentation might creep in owing to curtailment. Particular attention is called to this passage, since the doctrines propounded are so essentially false that they need to be insistently controverted in case, perchance, the seed sown might take root in the mind of some future First Lord of the Admiralty.

World Crisis, vol. II. p. 87

"A few weeks after my arrival at the Admiralty I was told that among several officers of Flag rank that wished to see me was Rear-Admiral Beatty. I had never met him before, but I had the following impressions about him. First, that he was the youngest Flag officer in the fleet. Second, that he had commanded the white gunboat which had come up the Nile as close as possible to support the 21st Lancers when we made the charge at Omdurman. Third, that he had seen a lot of fighting on land with the army, and consequently he had military as well as naval experience. Fourth, that he came of a hard-riding stock. His father had been in my own regiment, the 4th Hussars, and I often heard him talked of when I first joined. The Admiral, I knew, was a very fine horseman, with what is called, 'an eye for country.' Fifth, that there was much talk in Naval circles of his having been pushed on too fast. Such were the impressions aroused in my mind by the name of this officer, and I record them with minuteness because the decisions which I had the honour of taking in regard to him were most serviceable to the Royal Navy and to the British arms.

"I was, however, advised about him at the Admiralty in a decisively adverse sense. He had got on too fast, he had many interests ashore. His heart, it was said, was not wholly in the service. He had been offered an appointment in the Atlantic Fleet suited to his rank as Rear-Admiral. He had declined this appointment—a very serious step for a Naval officer to take when appointments were few in proportion to candidates—and he should in consequence not be

offered any further employment. It would be contrary to precedent to make a further offer. He had already been unemployed for eighteen months, and would probably be retired in the ordinary course at the expiration of the full three years' unemployment.

" But my first meeting with the Admiral induced me immediately to disregard this unfortunate advice. He became at once my Naval Secretary (or Private Secretary, as the appointment was then styled). Working thus side by side, in rooms which communicated, we perpetually discussed during the next fifteen months the problems of a naval war with Germany. It became increasingly clear to me that he viewed questions of Naval strategy and tactics in a different light to an average naval officer; he approached them, as it seemed to me, much more as a soldier would. His war experiences on land had illuminated the facts he had acquired in his naval training. He was no mere instrumentalist. He did not think of ' matériel ' as an end in itself, but only as a means. He thought of war problems in their unity by land, sea and air. His mind had been rendered quick and subtle by the situations of polo and the hunting field, and enriched by varied experiences against the enemy on Nile gunboats and ashore. It was with equal pleasure and profit that I discussed with him our Naval problem, now from this angle, now from that; and I was increasingly struck with the shrewd and profound sagacity of his comments expressed in language singularly free from technical jargon.

" I had no doubts whatever when the command of the Battle Cruiser Squadron fell vacant in the Spring of 1913 in appointing him over the heads of all to this incomparable command, the nucleus as it proved to be of the famous Battle Cruiser Fleet—the strategic cavalry of the Navy—that supreme combination of speed and power to which the thoughts of the Admiralty were continuously directed. And when two years later (February 3rd, 1915) I visited him on

board the *Lion*, with the scars of victorious battle fresh upon her from the action of the Dogger Bank, I heard from his Captains and his Admirals the expression of their respectful but intense enthusiasm for their leader. Well I do remember how as I was leaving the ship, the usually imperturbable Admiral Pakenham caught me by the sleeve, 'First Lord, I wish to speak to you in private,' and the intense conviction in his voice as he said, 'Nelson has come again.' These words often recurred to my mind."

To put the matter shortly—Rear-Admiral Beatty had had practically no sea-going experience, had refused an appointment as Rear-Admiral in a sea-going fleet by which he could have gained experience. Mr. Churchill, knowing nothing of the intricacies of Naval command, of the sudden, instant, unforeseen emergency when the essence of mature thought dictates, and experience confirms, the proper action; discounting Naval training and sea experience as valueless, with *unfortunate* self-confidence rejected the advice of his technical advisers and appointed him *over the heads of all to this incomparable command, the nucleus as it proved to be of the famous Battle Cruiser Fleet—the strategic cavalry of the Royal Navy—that supreme combination of speed and power to which the thoughts of the Admiralty were continuously directed.*

Grim reading this for Naval Officers who know the British Navy, its commands and its emergencies. We have recorded Mr. Churchill's reasons also with minuteness, but for a different reason to that which guided him in publishing them. In our opinion, for which we shall give reasons later on, the decisions that he took were most unserviceable to the Royal Navy and the British arms.

Beyond this we would emphasize the pernicious nature of the doctrines enunciated by him, namely, that the viewing of Naval strategy and tactics *in a different light to Naval Officers*, should be looked on

as a qualification for high Naval command; or that experience in the hunting field or at polo, can supersede the intimate knowledge of years of work with gunnery, torpedoes, submarines, communications, signals, tactics and manœuvres, fogs, mists and gales, and the other changes and chances of sea life which are the foundation, the bricks and the mortar of Naval experience.

We shall see how Admiral Beatty, gallant fighter though he was, failed from want of sea experience on the only three occasions when his capacity as an Admiral in command was put to the test.

On the first occasion he missed a complete victory over the enemy at the Dogger Bank. Secondly, he again lost a victory in the Jutland cruiser action by not closing up his fleet. On the third occasion he hazarded the opening moves of the Battle Fleet action at Jutland. Yet many of the admirals over whose heads Admiral Beatty had been passed by Mr. Churchill's *unfortunate* enthusiasm to the command of the Battle Cruisers would, from accumulated experience, on all the occasions on which the services of the Battle Cruisers were employed, have done work really serviceable to the Royal Navy and the British arms.

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Admiral Pakenham's remark that, in Admiral Beatty Nelson had come again, is not exactly complimentary to Nelson, the sea-officer who never failed in judgment in a situation requiring experience in action. It shows how little an officer present in a sea action may appreciate the essentials of what is in progress; viewing merely superficially those matters occurring in his immediate vicinity.

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Now in order to examine critically the claim that Lord Beatty would have done better than Lord Jellicoe had he commanded the Grand Fleet, we must carefully consider not only the actual performance of these two officers, but also that of the fleets they trained during the war. We should also examine any facts that may have been advanced and on which this claim is based.

But here at once we are faced by an insuperable

difficulty, since no facts have been adduced in support of the claim! The statement has merely been asserted, frequently asserted, and more often still hinted at. Yet not one jot of evidence has ever been advanced in its support. We therefore in the first place have to rely on an examination of the relative performances of the two admirals.

To be an admiral of merit a seaman must possess three separate qualities.

1.—He must be a sound strategist and tactician.

2.—He must be a good organizer, have thorough knowledge of, and be experienced in, the use of modern weapons, and insist on his fleet being practised in all the departments of fighting efficiency and therefore in tip-top fighting condition.

3.—He must be a good leader of men and possess their entire confidence.

The broad lines of the sea strategy of the late war were fixed by the Admiralty and were immutable; alterations were in reality outside the powers of the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet. Details such as sweeps in the North Sea, a choice of bases, etc., were to a great extent left to him, but there was nothing, so far as the main strategy of our fleets was concerned, which would have been varied had any other than Admiral Jellicoe commanded the fleet.

As regards tactics. The battlefleet tactics at Jutland were without fault. No officer of experience can suggest, with reason, any others which would have better suited the varying conditions of the battle. Admiral Jellicoe manœuvred from a position of disadvantage immediately preceding the battle to one of advantage, whereby he crossed the enemy's T. It was impossible to force the enemy's fleet to a closer action than that which was fought, taking speed and time into account; he therefore manœuvred his fleet into a position between the enemy and the German harbours ready to smash them next day. He also saved his fleet from a dangerous torpedo attack. In offence and defence he was equally

sound. Vague hints have been thrown out and eagerly absorbed by the public that Admiral Beatty had some manœuvre of his own which would have ensured the annihilation of the German Fleet. Apparently some enveloping movement is adumbrated. But all such ideas vanish like moonshine when they come to be tested practically. Wireless communication and extended methods of observation forbid that class of fanciful tactics. Moreover, had Admiral Jellicoe tried the risky tactic of dividing his fleet for an enveloping movement when, as it turned out, his enemy was in a position eleven miles different from that which he had anticipated, and his cruiser admiral was unable to correct the estimate, he might well have landed his fleet in irretrievable disaster.

Now what evidences have we of Admiral Beatty's capacity as a tactician?

His method of turning away from the menace of a submarine boat attack when threatened before the beam shows a failure to discriminate between close-range submarine attack and long-range destroyer attack. He made the same mistake both at the Dogger Bank action, when he turned the *Lion* away from such an attack, and after leaving Rosyth on the day of Jutland. Such a tactic could only be the result of failure to appreciate underlying reasons, or else a want of intimate knowledge of the weapons and vessels concerned. II. 95 III. 326

Lord Jellicoe in a similar circumstance acted correctly and turned *towards* the submarine. III. 376

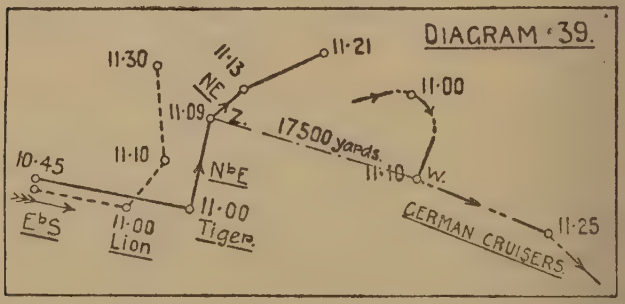
Lord Beatty's tactics in the Dogger Bank action landed his fleet in difficulties and led directly to the escape of the enemy. We must therefore digress for a short time and consider the Dogger Bank action.

Diagram 39 shows the critical time of the fight.

The *Lion* was steaming E. b S., along the dotted line, damaged and unable to keep up. At 10.45 Admiral Beatty sighted, or thought he sighted, which amounts to the same thing in action, the wash of a periscope two points on his starboard bow.

The *Lion* had then dropped a mile and a half behind the remainder of the ships.

Instead of making the warning signal that a submarine had been sighted, letting the other ships go on and turning the *Lion towards* the submarine, Admiral Beatty signalled
11.95 and plan to the whole Battle Cruiser Fleet to turn eight points away from the submarine to a N. b E. course. As no submarine warning was made, no one in the fleet could guess the motive for the manœuvre. No sooner had he done this than he made a signal to turn back again three points to N.E., and then, wishing to get our cruisers once



more to attack the German cruisers, he hoisted "Engage the enemy's rear;" but as the N.E. compass signal was flying before the latter signal was hauled down, all the ships read it as an order to attack the enemy bearing N.E., which was the *Blücher*, which ship was already disabled and was drifting astern of her squadron. This they all proceeded to do, and the result was that the German cruisers escaped.

Now let us see in greater detail what led to the confusion. At 10.54 when the *Lion* was at L (Diagram 40), Admiral Beatty saw what appeared to him to be the wash of a periscope two points on the starboard bow.

The *Tiger* at Tg, one and a half miles ahead of the *Lion*.

The "If" that Sticks

The wash of a periscope could hardly have been sighted by Admiral Beatty further than a mile; but let us increase this even up to a mile and a half. Even at such a distance, there would have been no possibility of helping the *Tiger* and the other cruisers, who were steaming at 25 knots, by making a turning signal.

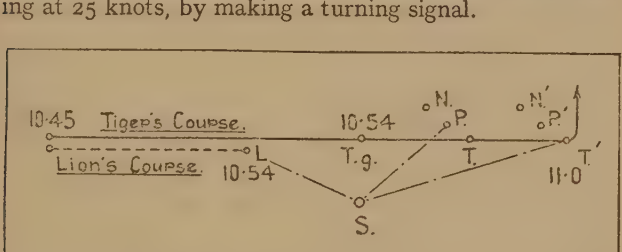


DIAGRAM 40.

Even supposing that such a signal could have been made, received and acted on in three minutes—a phenomenally short time; for, as a matter of fact, in reality it took six minutes; but let us take a possible three minutes—the *Tiger* and her consorts would have been as shown at T P N. The submarine would have been 50 degrees abaft the beam of the centre ship, the *Princess Royal*, while the *New Zealand*, N, the rear ship, would have been perfectly well able to look after herself.

An eight-point turn was in any case ridiculous, as it brought the sterns of the ships *past the bearing of the submarine* and opened their port sides to attack.

As a matter of fact, when at 11 o'clock the turn was actually made at the position shown at T'P'N', the ships were as safe as if the submarine had been in the Atlantic.

It was absolutely useless to signal a turn to the cruisers; they should have been allowed to go on with their action. All that was necessary for Admiral Beatty to do was, first,

to hoist the submarine warning signal, then to turn the *Lion towards* the submarine, and then to signal to his next in command to take over the command of the fleet. Had these simple things been done there is a very good chance that we might have bagged all the German cruisers.

Now, had an admiral of experience been in command of the Battle Cruisers, and, without in any way wishing to be invidious, we might as examples name two out of the several who come under that category and who were serving in the Grand Fleet, viz., Vice-Admiral Charles Madden or Vice-Admiral Doveton Sturdee—had any such admiral, experienced in fleet work and naval weapons, commanded at the Dogger Bank, we would in all probability have scooped up all the German Battle Cruisers. What had the Admiral to do? Simply nothing
Page 48 except to fight a straightforward chasing action in clear weather, in broad daylight; and, thank goodness, we have many admirals dogged enough not to let go when once they have their teeth into an enemy; and, secondly, when an emergency arose, instinctively, from experience, to do the right thing. Emergencies arose when a submarine was reported, and when the flagship, the *Lion*, was disabled.

To appreciate (1) that it was impossible to turn, by signal, ships that were 3,000 yards ahead, and steaming at 25 knots, in time to avoid attack from a submarine whose wash had been sighted two points on his bow; and (2) that the submarine warning signal would have caused a searching look-out to have been kept abaft the beam of all the ships, would have been mere commonplace inferences to a practised brain. Moreover, the differentiation between a massed long-range destroyer attack, and isolated short-range submarine attack would have been accomplished mentally weeks beforehand in quiet thought. Nor would an admiral of experience have failed to express his wishes clearly to his fleet, nor when his flagship had been disabled have failed to turn over the command to his next in seniority, nor left that unfortunate officer without any knowledge as to when his

Commander-in-Chief had ended giving orders and when he himself was free to take command. (See further, Appendix B.)

We have seen how in the Battle Cruiser action in Jutland, Phase I., Admiral Beatty failed to close up the 5th Battle Squadron to the battle cruisers before going helter-skelter for the enemy. The result was that the gun fire of these magnificent ships was lost for half an hour out of the three quarters of an hour of the engagement when steaming south. Had the fleet been closed up, it is probable that the *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary* would not have been lost and all the German cruisers might have been destroyed. Victory was compromised by excess of ardour, want of experience, and an absence of tactical appreciation. Page 59

Let us now turn to 6 p.m. on May 31st, when Admiral Beatty joined the battlefleet and Admiral Jellicoe. Page 74

The battle cruisers had been designed and built with the sole idea of being faster than any other large ship afloat, and being strong enough to press home a reconnaissance past the enemy's scouts and report details to the Commander-in-Chief of the battlefleet. Yet, on joining our battlefleet, Admiral Beatty had completely lost touch with the enemy's battlefleet although he had three light cruiser divisions under his orders, and, moreover, at 5.40 he had been only 8,000 yards from the 5th Battle Squadron, which had the German battlefleet then under fire. The result was that, at the most critical of all moments of the day, the deployment of the battlefleet was delayed for 14 minutes.

To show how completely the Vice-Admiral had lost all idea of the position of the enemy's battlefleet we have only to refer to the end of Par. 18 of his report to the Commander-in-Chief after the action; he states:

" At the time (5.56) only three of the enemy's battle cruisers were visible, closely followed by battleships of the *König* class." J.P. 135

The actual position was that the leading ship of the German battlefleet was on a bearing three points or Plan 29

33° different from that of the third of the enemy's battle cruisers and was six miles distant from her !

This visibility is confirmed by other reports

Moreover, the whole five of the enemy's battle cruisers were in company with each other. If three only could be seen the visibility was limited to 14,000 yards, and as the leading German battleship was 21,000 yards from the *Lion* she was three and a half miles beyond the range of vision of anyone on board the Vice-Admiral's flagship.

Battle cruiser scraps are as naught compared with battleship actions. At the time of the two battlefleets meeting little loss would have been felt had all our battle cruisers been wafted away to the Pacific. But what really was important was that our Commander-in-Chief should know the bearing, distance and course of the enemy's battlefleet, and this information was not forthcoming.

What would Nelson have said if Blackwood had reported the enemy out and yet been unable to give details ?

It is important to appreciate fully the relative values of the battle cruisers and the battlefleet.

On the run South the battle cruiser action was of predominating importance and our battlefleet of no account ; but the moment that the German battlefleet was sighted a sudden and complete reversal took place in relative values. The battlefleet became all important, and the battle cruisers relapsed into being merely scouts to obtain every shred of information possible and forward it to the Commander-in-Chief. Every cruiser necessary should have been used, and every effort should have been directed to this end. Again, after joining the fleet after deployment, the battle cruisers, with their high speed and heavy armament, in the misty weather that prevailed, should have been used as a strong scouting force to sweep aside the enemy's light cruisers and keep the Commander-in-Chief informed of every movement on the part of the enemy, so that the slower battlefleet could be manœuvred to the best advantage.

Take another incident. Admiral Beatty's signal at 7.30 p.m.: "Submit van of battlefleet follow battle cruisers. We can then cut off whole enemy's battlefleet," showed a lack of tactical appreciation; since there was nothing from which to cut off the enemy's battlefleet. Admiral Jellicoe had already cut off the enemy's battlefleet from their harbours; there was nothing else left from which to cut them off—a fact that Admiral Beatty must have failed to appreciate. The only interpretation possible to the Commander-in-Chief was that the signal had been incorrectly made, and that "part" and not "whole" was intended. This loose class of report and suggestion is liable to produce difficulty and doubt in the mind of a Commander-in-Chief who receives it, and might have caused Admiral Jellicoe to misjudge the position had it not been for the fact that he himself had the enemy's battlefleet in sight at the time the signal was received! III. 583

Taking all the above tactical mistakes into consideration, surely Admiral Pakenham owes an apology to the memory of Nelson.

Should Mr. Churchill ever peruse these pages we wonder whether he may not be converted to the opinion that Naval tactics may be better viewed by a sailor than by a soldier. Perhaps he will also realize that solid, grinding experience at sea with ships, fleets, submarines and torpedoes is a better training for an Admiral than polo or hunting, and that the advice of technical officers may not be so "unfortunate" as immature judgment may consider it to be.

Let us now examine the relative efficiency of the battleship and the battle cruiser fleets.

Of the qualities on which judgment can be based, two are outstanding, namely, gunnery efficiency and signal efficiency.

Let us first take gunnery efficiency.

There is little doubt that the battle cruisers were considerably inferior in merit as regards accurate gunnery. Admiral Jellicoe took the greatest trouble to enforce

gunnery practices on the battleships. The gunnery practices of the First and Second Battle Cruiser Squadrons were under the Admiral commanding the Battle Cruiser Squadrons. The boast that the "Battle cruisers did their gunnery practice in action," if true, fully accounted for their bad shooting in the Jutland battle.

II. 131

Admiral Hipper, the admiral commanding the German battle cruisers, reported to the Commander-in-Chief of the German High Sea Fleet after the battle, commenting adversely on the shooting of the battle cruisers and eulogistically on the shooting of the battleships.

Also Scheer "High Sea Fleet," 144

Again Commander Georg von Hase, gunnery officer of the *Derfflinger*, in his book, "Kiel and Jutland" (after forty-five minutes' action with our battle cruisers), states:

"Kiel and Jutland," Chap. III. 167

4.50. First part of battle cruiser action closed.

Derfflinger had come out with fighting strength unimpaired.

Later on during twenty minutes engaged with some of our battleships, he states:

6.25. *Lützow* heavily hit.

6.30. Three hits on *Derfflinger*.

6.50. *Derfflinger* was now a pretty sorry sight.

(After another bout of ten minutes with our battleships.)

7.55. Salvo after salvo fell around us. Hit after hit struck the ship.

These quotations, coupled with the fact that six of our battle cruisers fought for three-quarters of an hour with five German battle cruisers and did them no serious damage, while we lost two ships, cannot but convict the battle cruisers of inferior shooting.

The next section of vital importance in fighting is the signal department. The signal department is all important next to the engine-room and the gunnery officer department. Here much was left to be desired. After every allowance has been made for disorganization caused by damage done in battle, the signal organization of the battle cruisers must stand convicted of want of efficiency.

The concentration of fire at the Dogger Bank was muddled, and also again in Jutland, Phase I. Here a signal for concentration of fire was made, but the *Princess Royal*, the ship next astern of the *Lion*, was the only one to take in the signal. Why was the ordinary hard and fast routine when repeating signals not adhered to? III. 334

The result was that the *Derfflinger* was left for nearly ten minutes unfired at, which was a fatal mistake, as it is of the utmost importance that no ship of the enemy should be allowed full undisturbed exercise of her fire control. The signal was made before fire was opened, so we cannot look to the flurry of a fight for the excuse.

Again, Jutland, Phase I., the general signal at 2.32 to turn in succession to S.S.E. was not passed on to the Fifth Battle Squadron. At 3.5 the *Tiger* informed the *Lion* that the 2.32 signal and the signals made since had not been passed to the *Barham*. Yet again, at 4.40, when Admiral Beatty swung round away from the German battlefleet, the signal made by flags could not be seen by Admiral Evan Thomas, who was eight miles off. So important a signal should have been passed by searchlight direct to the Fifth Battle Squadron. That one was available is shown by it being used both before and also after this signal was made. The result was that the Fifth Battle Squadron held on for eight minutes towards the German battlefleet, and consequently suffered considerable damage. III. 331, *footnote* 2 III. 340 J.P. 1608–1745

These signal matters may seem of small moment, but in reality they are not. The evidence afforded by these failures is that the signal departments of the Battle Cruisers, the medium for vital battle-intercommunication in the fleet, were slack and had been indifferently trained.

No mistakes in signalling seem to have occurred among the ships of the battlefleet.

Taking the gunnery and signal performance of the battle cruisers and of the battlefleet into consideration, we are forced to the conclusion that the training of the battle cruisers for battle was inferior to that of the battle-

ships. Had Admiral Beatty therefore been in command of the Grand Fleet up to the date of the Battle of Jutland there is reason to assume that that fleet would have shown less efficiency than it did on the 31st May, 1916, the day that Jutland was fought.

As regards leadership.

Both Admiral Jellicoe and Admiral Beatty were leaders of men. Admiral Jellicoe possessed the entire confidence of the fleet. Admiral Beatty was looked on as a dashing leader, but for some time also as what sailors from their association with Eastern waters call a "Makee Learn." His inexperience, like his gallantry, was fully appreciated in the fleet.

If we take the whole of the above into quiet thought there is little doubt all will echo the short prayer, " Thank God that Lord Jellicoe commanded the Grand Fleet both before and at the Battle of Jutland."

APPENDIX A

REMARKS ON CLOSING UP THE BATTLE CRUISER FLEET

It may not at first sight be apparent how the 5th Battle Squadron could have been closed up in twelve minutes without the battle cruisers slowing down or stopping their engines, or losing distance from the enemy.

Had Admiral Beatty at once ordered the 5th Battle Squadron to close at full speed, and had he himself altered course directly for them—— What! Turn away from an enemy when reported? Yes! for the first duty of the Admiral was to close up his squadron as rapidly as possible. Had he done these two things, he could have been working his boilers up to full speed while closing up his squadron. Had the cruisers closed the battleships for five minutes, then turned round again (this taking two minutes) and steamed back for five minutes, then the *Lion* would have been back at the place from which she started in twelve minutes from the time of first turning. During the twelve minutes the battleships would have taken two minutes to turn and then have closed the spot for ten minutes or a distance of three-and-a-half miles. As the cruiser line was one-and-a-half miles long, the battleships would have been in correct station.

But the necessity for this would never have arisen if Admiral Beatty had cruised in a tactically correct formation.

APPENDIX B

SOME FURTHER REMARKS ON THE DOGGER BANK ACTION

At 11.9 course was altered to N.E. This could not cut the *Blücher* off from the rest of her squadron (as suggested in the Official History of the War, II., 93). A course nothing to the northward of E. b N. would have been required for this. The turn to N.E. is inexplicable except on the grounds that the *Blücher* was the target intended.

The result of the action was decided at 11.14. Let us see why.

Up to that time Admiral Moore was receiving orders from Admiral Beatty, since it was not until this time that the *Tiger* hauled down the signal to turn to N.E.

Had Admiral Moore instantly assumed command, and turned the ships to chase the German cruisers, at least two minutes would have elapsed before the ships would have taken in the signal and have commenced to turn, and at least the equivalent of two more minutes would have elapsed due to turning and consequent loss of speed. The position would then have been as shown in Diagram 41. Our cruiser admiral would have had the choice of two alternatives.

(1) To chase for three quarters of an hour* until he again got in range and then use his bow armament only. But at this period of the action it was essential to inflict the maximum damage as time was short, for the action could not be carried on for more than another two hours; or

* This gives the British ships one knot speed over the Germans, after the *Blücher* had fallen out.

(2) To try and get into a position to use the whole of the armament of each ship; which he could not have done for nearly an hour and a half. For, as a matter of fact, he would at first have hauled out on the port side of the enemy, as shown in Diagram 41, because he was already on their port side; and then as they altered course for Wilhelmshaven, he would have been obliged to turn to starboard and haul out on their starboard side. If he had started to haul out on the starboard side they would probably have kept on for Heligoland.

It all comes back to the same hard fact, namely, that

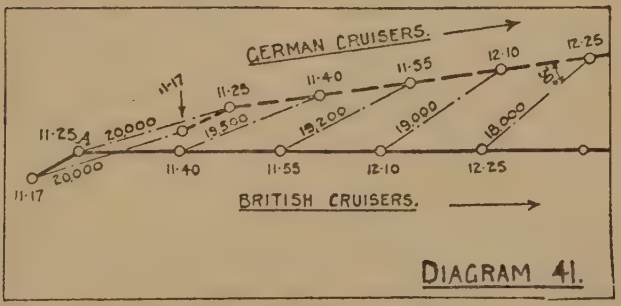


DIAGRAM 41.

the eight-point turn—quite needlessly undertaken—allowed the German cruisers to escape.

Let us look a little more closely into the signalling.

The *Lion* had only two signal haulyards left, but a lot can be done with two haulyards and a daylight signal lamp.

Admiral Beatty used the *Blue* pendant for the eight-point turn to N. b E. This meant that all the ships were to turn at the same moment. This was correct. But when he turned back the three points to N.E., instead of using the *Blue* pendant again, like any experienced Admiral would have done, he used the *compass* pendant, which either signifies a course to be steered,

or if hoisted with another signal it shows the bearing of the object talked about in the signal. As this pendant was flying at the same time as the signal to engage the enemy's rear, not one ship only, but all the ships, understood it to mean " attack the ship bearing N.E.," namely the *Blücher*. Had the *Blue* pendant been used there could have been no such confusion. Inexperience again.

Now the *Lion* was dropping fast, and Admiral Beatty had got the cruisers going full speed on an errand which he did not want, so, in hope of heading them off, he made " Keep closer to the enemy." Which enemy ? Whether the *Blücher* or the other cruisers was not specified ; but as no one saw the signal it made no difference to the action.

Now, had he done what any admiral whose brain had been prepared for emergencies would have done, he would at 11.0 have made no signal at all except to his second-in-command to take charge. At that time he had the *Aurora* and *Arethusa* close to him, either of which could have communicated his signal to the fleet if the *Lion* was unable to do so. By failing to do this his second-in-command was put in a very awkward position.

In the first place Admiral Beatty did not make the usual signal indicating that a submarine had been sighted. Hence the Admiral second-in-command and all the Captains of the other cruisers were absolutely in the dark as to why the eight-point turn which headed the ships towards the *Blücher* had been made. No one had the slightest idea what was the meaning of the manœuvre. Had Admiral Beatty hoisted the recognized signal for submarine attack, he would have at once placed everyone *au courant* with his reasons for the turn.

Now the signal to " engage the rear of the enemy bearing N.E." was not hauled down by the *Tiger* repeating to the *New Zealand* till 11.14. Admiral Moore in the *New Zealand*, therefore, up to 11.14, was acting directly under Admiral Beatty's orders. When was Admiral Moore to take over in default of his Commander-in-Chief delegating the command to him by signal ?

Appendix C

The actions of the Second-in-Command, naturally, were guided by temperament. He could either have said to himself, "Thank goodness this jiggling about with the ships is finished with by the *Lion* being nearly out of signalling distance; I will now carry on and do what I want in spite of the signals just made and excuse myself afterwards by saying that the *Lion* was so far astern as to be away from the control of the fleet." He might, in fact, like Nelson, have put his telescope to his blind eye. This, paradoxically, is probably what an impulsive fighter like Admiral Beatty himself might have done. But at what moment was he to step in and take command? That was the crucial question.

On the other hand, a second-in-command impelled by a temperament accustomed to discipline might say, "I will carry out the obvious intention of my senior officer as conveyed by his signal and finish off the *Blücher*." He did the latter and has ever since been blamed.

APPENDIX C

THE BREAK THROUGH OF THE GERMAN FLEET AT NIGHT

(Written reports made after the battle)

Valiant reported.

At 11.35 p.m. observed heavy night action on starboard quarter. From the evidence we surmised that there appeared on this occasion to be two German cruisers with at least two funnels and a crane amidships apparently steaming to the eastward at high speed. J.P. 211 par. 133

Malaya report, 11.40.

Three points abaft starboard beam observed what appeared to be an attack by our destroyers on some enemy big ships steering the same way as ours. . . . The leading ship of the enemy which was seen by the flash of their explosion had two masts, two funnels and a conspicuous crane (apparently *Westfalen* class). J.P. 219

Champion report.

J.P. 224 About 11.30 p.m. heavy firing was opened on our starboard beam, apparently at some of our destroyers between the 13th flotilla and the enemy. I hauled out to the eastward as I was unable to attack with any of our own flotilla, our own forces being between me and the enemy. I then resumed course South.

No further reason for hauling out to the *eastward* was given.

III. 404 states In the bewilderment of searchlights, gun flashes and explosions Captain Farie, who was leading it (13th flotilla) in the *Champion*, believed that he himself was being fired on ; and judging that our own people were between him and the enemy he considered it was impossible to deliver an attack. He therefore swerved away to the eastward. As, however, he made the turn without signal, only the two destroyers immediately astern followed him, and as he led them away to the eastward, he forced the Harwich destroyers, which were next, as well as the 12th flotilla, which was beyond them, also to turn away to port in order to clear. The effect was to open the road for the Germans to pass through.

Again, after an interval of two hours.

III. 410 As he (Captain Farie) did so, ships were clearly seen to the southward, and the *Marksman* asked *Champion* what they were.

Her reply was: " Germans, I think," and for a while she held on towards them, but at 2.34, for some reason, she started to make another cast to the eastward. Unhappily the turn was made a moment too soon, for by this time the Germans had resumed their course ; and as the *Moresby*, the rearmost of the division, was following round she had a glimpse through the mist of four pre-Dreadnoughts 4,000 yards to the westward.

Lieutenant-Commander Alison hoisted " Compass West," hauled out to port and fired a high-speed torpedo, missing the battleships, but sinking a destroyer *V* 4. The two rear squadrons of the enemy passed on unscathed.

APPENDIX D

SYNOPSIS OF LOSSES IN BRITISH AND GERMAN FLEETS

PHASE I. : CRUISER ACTION

	British losses.	*German losses.*
Battle Cruiser	*Indefatigable*	Nil
,, ,,	*Queen Mary*	Nil
Destroyer	*Nestor*	*V* 27
,,	*Nomad*	*V* 29

PHASE II. : ADVANCED CRUISER ACTION

Battle Cruiser	*Invincible*	Nil
Armoured Cruiser	*Defence*	Nil
,, ,,	*Warrior*	Nil
Light Cruiser	Nil	*Wiesbaden*
Destroyer	*Shark*	Nil

PHASE III. : BATTLEFLEET ACTION

Battle Cruiser	Nil	*Lützow*
Destroyer	Nil	*S* 24

PHASE IV. : NIGHT ACTION

Battleship	Nil	*Pommern*
Light Cruiser	Nil	*Frauenlob*
,, ,,	Nil	*Rostock*
,, ,,	Nil	*Elbing*
Flotilla Leader	*Tipperary*	Nil
Destroyer	*Ardent*	*V* 4
,,	*Fortune*	*V* 4
,,	*Sparrowhawk*	Nil
,,	*Turbulent*	Nil

Appendix D

The British losses were mainly in the Cruiser Action, Phase I., the reasons for which have been discussed; and in the Advanced Cruiser Action, Phase II., owing to the armoured cruisers and the *Invincible* coming under the concentrated fire of the German battleships and battle cruisers as they emerged from the mist.

Phase III., the Battlefleet Action: our fleet sank one battle cruiser and one destroyer, and lost nothing.

Phase IV., the Night Action: the destroyers did well, sinking one battleship, three light cruisers and two destroyers for the loss of one flotilla leader and four destroyers.

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